

Bill Gates visits Kuwait for full day of activities



Rival Libya factions agree on steps to end deadlock



Iran film directors protest colleague's jail term



Liverpool beaten by lowly Newcastle



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# GOVERNOR OF ADEN KILLED IN CAR BOMB

IS CLAIMS ATTACK, THREATENS MORE • NEW BLOW TO HADI



Min 6°  
Max 14°  
High Tide 08:10 & 20:15  
Low Tide 02:10 & 13:13

## OPEC POLICY RISKS FURTHER PRICE PRESSURE

**VIENNA:** OPEC's policy of maintaining high oil production risks heaping more downward pressure on oil prices, especially with Iranian crude set to enter the global marketplace, analysts say. While lower prices eat into the revenues of the oil cartel's members, cheap crude may result in lower production from non-OPEC nations - helping countries like Saudi Arabia preserve their market share. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries decided at its meeting in Vienna on Friday against cutting the cartel's oil output despite sliding prices and ahead of higher production from Iran next year.

Going into the meeting, OPEC - whose members together pump out more than one third of world oil - has consistently struggled to keep production at a target of 30 million barrels per day. The cartel is pumping out around 32 million barrels daily - a figure that is set to rise in coming months as Iran looks to produce more crude following the lifting of sanctions - while OPEC appears to have abandoned its target following Friday's meeting.

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**ADEN:** Yemenis inspect the scene of a car bomb attack that killed the Governor of Aden Jaafar Saad (seen inset) in the Tawahi neighborhood of this Yemeni port city yesterday. — AP/AFP

**ADEN:** A car bombing claimed by the Islamic State group yesterday killed the governor of Yemen's second city Aden, a day after the UN's envoy visited to press for long-delayed peace talks. A statement posted on Twitter by the jihadist group said it was behind a blast that hit the convoy of Jaafar Saad in the Tawahi neighborhood of the major port, killing him and eight bodyguards. In a statement carried by the official Saba news agency, Aden security chief General Mohamed Mussad confirmed Saad's death and said six of his guards were also killed.

Images circulated on social media showed a wrecked car on fire on a main road in the southern city. Saad was only recently appointed governor, and was known to be close to President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi who returned to Aden last month after several months in exile in Riyadh. Pro-Hadi forces, aided by a Saudi-led coalition, have battled Iran-backed rebels in Yemen since March, after the insurgents overran the capital Sanaa and advanced south, forcing the government to flee to Saudi Arabia.

Fighting between the Houthi rebels and loyalist forces has plunged the impoverished nation into chaos, which jihadist groups have exploited to make sweeping gains, particularly in southern regions. Aden's Tawahi district has become a known hideout for jihadists, including Al-Qaeda militants. IS has claimed a string of attacks in Yemen, including the bombing of Hadi's government headquarters in October and multiple suicide attacks on mosques in Sanaa attended by Shiite worshippers that killed 142 people. It also claimed the killing of 50 soldiers in a November

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**DAMASCUS:** Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad gives an interview to a journalist from Britain's Sunday Times in his Damascus residence. — AFP

## ASSAD SAYS BRITAIN'S SYRIA STRIKES 'ILLEGAL'

**LONDON:** Britain's bombing campaign against Islamic State extremists in Syria is "illegal" and will only cause "terrorism" to spread, President Bashar Al-Assad said in an interview published yesterday. "It will be harmful and illegal and it will support terrorism as happened after the coalition started its operation a year or so (ago)," he told The Sunday Times after British MPs voted on Dec 2 to join the US-led bombing campaign over Syria.

Terror, he said, was like a cancer which needed to be tackled with a "comprehensive" strategy which would

involve working with troops on the ground. "You cannot cut out part of the cancer. You have to extract it. This kind of operation is like cutting out part of the cancer."

That will make it spread in the body faster. You cannot defeat (IS) through air strikes alone. You cannot defeat them without cooperation with forces on the ground. You cannot defeat them if you do not have buy-in from the general public and the government," he said. "They are going to fall again."

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## POLICE PROBE LONDON TUBE STABBING

**LONDON:** British counter-terror police were questioning a 29-year-old man on suspicion of attempted murder yesterday after a stabbing attack in a London Underground train station that is being treated as a "terrorist incident". Detectives from Britain's Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) were searching a home in east London in connection with Saturday's attack at Leytonstone station, which left a 56-year-old man with serious knife injuries.

Amateur video footage of the incident showed one passer-by shouting "You're no Muslim" at the suspect as he was pinned down by officers in the ticket hall, where a pool of blood was seen on the ground. Sky News television reported that the man "apparently shouted 'this is for Syria,' although it did not quote anyone. Police could not confirm the report when contacted by AFP and it is not evident from video footage circulating online.

"As a result of information received at the time from people who were at the scene and subsequent investigations carried out by the CTC, I am treating this as a terrorist incident," said the police unit's chief Richard Walton. "I would continue to urge the public to remain calm, but alert and vigilant."

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**LONDON:** A police officer stands guard outside Leytonstone station in north London yesterday, a day after three people were stabbed. — AFP



**CARTAGENA, Colombia:** This undated handout picture shows the remains of the Spanish galleon San Jose, sunk off the Caribbean coast of Colombia. — AFP

## COLOMBIA FINDS TREASURE GALLEON 300-YEAR MYSTERY ENDS

**CARTAGENA, Colombia:** Colombia says it has found the shipwreck of a storied Spanish galleon laden with gold and precious stones, three centuries after it was sunk by the British in the Caribbean.

"This is the most valuable treasure that has been found in the history of humanity," declared President Juan Manuel Santos on

Saturday, speaking from the northern port city of Cartagena, close to where experts made the hugely valuable find. Treasure hunters had searched for the ship for decades, and although they found plenty of other wrecks, the San Jose's final resting place had remained a mystery until now.

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## WOMEN GETTING MORE INTERESTED IN IS TERRORISM

**WASHINGTON:** Islamic State propaganda is resonating with a growing and loyal following of young women and teenagers, complicating US counterterrorism efforts to identify and monitor supporters such as Tashfeen Malik, the 29-year-old mother suspected in the California shootings along with her husband. It's unusual for a woman to be involved in mass violence in the United States. But the increasing number of women drawn to IS is worrisome to American law enforcement and making it almost impossible to flag the prototypical recruit for investigation. Even harder to detect: A husband and wife team, like the one blamed for Wednesday's shootings in San Bernardino, that doesn't need to use a telephone for attack-plotting.

men by far account for the largest percentage of supporters of the Islamic State group. But authorities are concerned that the number of women supporting extremist ideology is on the rise.

Before the most recent attacks, the Anti-Defamation League had identified 15 women linked to Islamic extremist activity in 2014 and 2015 - a higher total than in the entire prior decade. A recent George Washington University report on IS found that one-third of the nearly 300 Twitter accounts of US-based IS sympathizers monitored during a six-month period appeared to be operated by women.

Most recruits had tried to join IS on its home turf, including three teenage girls from Colorado who were intercepted in Germany last year and a 19-year-old Mississippi woman who the FBI says set off with her love interest before being stopped at a regional airport. Others are accused of planning violence: In New York, two women

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## MODI MOCKED, 'AMMA' HECKLED AFTER FLOODS

**CHENNAI:** One of India's most powerful politicians, a former movie star called "Amma" or "Mother" by her followers, is being heckled and abused for going missing in action after floods swept the capital of the southern state of Tamil Nadu, which she rules. It's a salutary lesson for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who at first drew nods of approval when he rushed to Chennai last week, promising to stand by its people in their hour of need.

Yet, within hours, Modi became the object of mockery on social media after his press office released a doctored photo of him inspecting flood damage. For both him and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha Jayaram, the image of strong leadership created by their publicity machines was undermined.

Until the floods that ravaged the city of six million, the lofty remoteness of Jayalalitha added to the aura around a

leader with an almost hysterical following. Devotees of the 1960s screen idol have immolated themselves in her defense in the past. Now, she faces a backlash from residents fed up with the sight of her image on billboards, aid packets and her own Jaya Plus TV channel. She has been since in public only twice during the crisis - once with Modi.

Angry youths heckled a state minister and officials in Jayalalitha's north Chennai constituency, where people were sitting on the roadside amid sludge and mountains of garbage, their shanties swept away by the worst rains in a century. "Forget about Amma coming here, there was no sign of the party cadres," said one of them, called Dorairaj.

About 280 people have died across Tamil Nadu since torrential rains on Dec. 1 submerged tracts of Chennai under up to

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**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. —Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



**Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets UK Prime Minister's envoy and Deputy National Security Adviser Paddy McGuinness.**

## IRAN'S NUCLEAR FILE AMONG PRESSING ISSUES ON GCC LEADERS' AGENDA

**KUWAIT:** Relations between the GCC and Iran remain very important for each other and are governed by historical, geopolitical, economic, security and social considerations and are affected by some regional and internal developments. The importance of these relationships are highlighted through maintaining this file as a top priority on the agenda of the GCC summits.

The regional and differing visions towards some issues of the region usually control the relationship between the GCC countries and Iran, dominated sometimes by quiet diplomacy and sometimes dominated by escalation of disagreements, particularly with regard to Iran's nuclear program and the Iranian interference in the internal affairs of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the issue of Iran's occupation of the three UAE islands.

### Great concern

Iran's nuclear program has constituted great concern to the GCC countries since Iran's announcement of its intention to build nuclear reactors and then the opening of the Bushehr reactor in 2011 which is located in an unstable region geologically close to the coast of the Arabian Gulf, banks of which are shared by the GCC states and Iran, and what that can pose a significant environmental threat to the region.

Information and reports about Iran's nuclear activities in the reactor did not conform with the peaceful uses through the enrichment of uranium at rates higher than allowed, thus causing increasing concern to the GCC countries as well as to major states, prompting the International Atomic Energy Agency to call on Iran to use such reactors peacefully which Iran has rejected.

Iran did work on developing nuclear arms in the past, the U.N. atomic agency concluded in a recent report that wraps up a near decade of investigations and opens the way to implementing a landmark deal aimed at reducing any future nuclear threat from Tehran.

But the report contested that view and came down on the side of US allegations, saying the agency "assesses that a range of activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device were conducted in Iran prior to the end of 2003 as a coordinated effort, and some activities took place" up to 2009.

At the same time, the report said any such work was restricted to 'feasibility and scientific studies' that stopped short of the advanced development of such weapons. Also, the agency described its finding as an assessment and left a final ruling on whether the case should be closed in the hands of Washington and other leading nations represented on the IAEA's 35-nation board. That decision is tentatively set for Dec. 15, when the board meets to decide whether to endorse the deal.

Expected approval would close the IAEA investigation and fulfill a key requirement of the July 14 nuclear deal between Iran and six world powers. That deal specifies that the agency must be in the position to wrap up the probe and deliver its views as a key condition for the start of an end to nuclear-related sanctions on Tehran. In exchange, Tehran must cut nuclear technologies that could be used in the future to build a bomb.

Beyond its drive for an end to all sanctions imposed on it over its atomic activities, Iran attaches huge importance to closing the books on the allegations in its drive to lift all punitive measures against it and wipe the slate clean over its nuclear program.

Israel, Iran's implacable foe, urged further pressure on Tehran. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu asked the IAEA to "continue to deepen the investigation," saying Iran's past was relevant to the "current status" of its nuclear program.

Iran finally agreed to enter into direct negotiations with the group (5 +1) (five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) in order to reach an agreement that meets the demands of these countries and contribute to the lifting of the siege.

The negotiations resulted in the signing of an agreement between the group (5+1) and Iran last July about Iran's nuclear program adopted by the UN Security Council, where Iran agreed on implementation of restrictions on the program and on international inspections to monitor the implementation of the Convention in exchange for the lifting of international sanctions against it in the event of compliance with the conditions as Iran agreed to reduce the number of centrifuges used to enrich uranium.

### Peace and security

Commenting on the nuclear agreement between Iran and the group (5 +1), His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah expressed the hope that this agreement contributes to strengthening peace and security in the region. He also congratulated leaders of the group (5 +1), Iran and Secretary General of the United Nations on the signing of the agreement. Emirates congratulated the signing of the agreement, describing it as "historic" and expressed the hope that the agreement will contribute to strengthening regional security and stability.

First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah said in a press statement last October on the Gulf-Iranian relations, "We are ready to start a dialogue with Iran that is based on the fundamental principles and we are always in the GCC countries, we find there are rules for cooperation with neighboring Iran and we hope to start this dialogue for the security and stability of the region."

"We are still in the GCC appeal to neighboring Iran to act in accordance with international rules and are ready to open a dialogue with Iran and have to work in accordance with the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries in the region and for Iran's commitment to good neighborliness," he said. —KUNA

## AMIR RECEIVES STATE OFFICIALS

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Seif Palace yesterday. His Highness the Amir also received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Bader Al-Essa.

### UK envoy

In the meantime, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled met with UK Prime Minister's envoy and Deputy National Security Adviser Paddy McGuinness at the Foreign Ministry. The meeting discussed promoting bilateral ties in all domains and the latest regional and international developments. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also received the visiting Special Envoy of Armenia Levon Sargsyan at the Foreign Ministry yesterday. The meeting discussed promoting bilateral ties in all domains and the latest regional and international developments. The acting premier meanwhile met with UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ahmad Alhendawi. The meeting discussed means of cooperation between Kuwait and the UN on supporting youth, regionally and

internationally. Later, Sheikh Sabah met with Mayor of Mexico City Miguel Angel Mancera. The meeting discussed promoting bilateral ties in all domains and the latest regional and international developments. The meetings were attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Walid Al-Khabeizi, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Minister's Office Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Mohammad Al-Sabah and a number of senior officials at the ministry.

Also yesterday, Chairman of the Kuwaiti National Security Apparatus Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah received McGuinness and his accompanying delegation. The Apparatus said in a press release that both sides discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to develop them, in addition to several issues of common interest. The meeting was attended by Assistant Chairman of the National Security Apparatus Sheikh Sabah Al-Shamlan Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, Ghanem received at his office yesterday the visiting Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian Regional Representative Council Farouq Mohammad. During the meeting, the two parties discussed bilateral relations and ways of reinforcing them, in addition to the latest regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by several members of parliament.

### Informatics Award

In other news, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will patronize and attend 'The 15th session of Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award.' During the ceremony to be held at Bayan Palace today, His Highness the Amir will honor winners of this round. —KUNA

## SCPD SEEKS MEMBERSHIPS IN INT'L DONOR ORGANIZATIONS

**KUWAIT:** Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) Dr Khaled Mahdi said the council is seeking to obtain membership of the supreme steering committees of international donor organizations.

Mahdi said in a press statement yesterday that it had recently participated in Busan conference in Seoul, South Korea, to discuss the strategic partnership of the public and private sectors in the sustainable development process, and to review the role of the international partnership in promoting development in the world, and how to involve the private sector in the process.

He added that there is a challenge related to how to have a unified strategy in dealing with public and private sectors in terms of sustainable development, pointing out that the SCPD is considering the establishment of a Public Policy Center to achieve homogeneity of local, regional and international policies.

Moreover, he said the conference considered how to make use of the Korean experience in the process of sustainable development, pointing to the need for policies that emphasize the development of social responsibility programs and platform through partnership between the public and private sectors.

The Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) is responsible for formulating the vision for the state and control development plans as well as the preparation of a strategy for development proposals in Kuwait, and the preparation of general plans for economic and social development.

### Conference

In other news, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) is taking part in the 32nd International Conference for the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, Geneva, December 8-10 to shed light on Kuwait's bright image in international humanitarian and relief work, a KRCS official has said.

Speaking to KUNA yesterday, the KRCS Director of Media and Public Relations Khalid Al-Zaid stressed the importance of the event that brings together the world's humanitarian organizations in one place to highlight

their role. Zaid noted that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) red crescent societies made their decision to share one pavilion.

Achievements of the KRCS have set the society as a model for voluntary work in Kuwait, Zaid said, noting that the GCC pavilion is attracting a lot of visitors. The International Conference is a unique global forum bringing together the States Parties to the Geneva

5,000 food packages and 5,000 packages of cleaning materials, in addition to 5,000 blankets and 10,000 school bags, said Omar Al-Azayza, director of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.

The Kuwaiti aid has entered the Strip via Rafah crossing in coordination with Egyptian, Kuwaiti, and Palestinian Red Crescent societies, Azayza said, adding that they were received earlier at the Palestinian Red Crescent's storages and



**GAZA:** A KRCS worker delivers a humanitarian aid shipment to the benefit of Palestinians in Gaza. —KUNA

Conventions of 1949 and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, including the 189 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, their International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with its specific mandate established under the Geneva Conventions. The Conference provides a non-political forum for dialogue on humanitarian issues.

### Aid shipment

Separately, KRCS announced that it has delivered a humanitarian aid shipment to the Palestinian people via Rafah land crossing. The shipment contained

they will be distributed to families in accordance with the Red Crescent's program.

The packages will be handed to poor and needy families, as well as Palestinians affected by difficult social circumstances, particularly with the advent of winter season, he said, indicating that this aid is part of KRCS series of humanitarian aid provided for the Palestinian people throughout three wars.

Azayza expressed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti people and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for the aid, valuing the efforts exerted by the Kuwaiti government and KRCS in providing and donating humanitarian aid and relief to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people. —KUNA

## FRENCH EMBASSY ORGANIZES COURSE FOR MOE SUPERVISORS

**KUWAIT:** The French Embassy in Kuwait is holding a four day training course for the Ministry of Education's (MOE) French Language Teaching Supervisors (FLT). The course starts today and ends Thursday. The course comes within a cooperation treaty held between Kuwait and France on January 27, 2015, upon which the French embassy's lan-

guage attache and the International Center for Educational Studies will provide instructors and MOE will provide training auditoriums. Passing this course, FLT supervisors will be qualified and accredited as international graders of the DELF Prim and Junior tests (A.1, A.2) for a period of five years.

## SUBEIH: INDUSTRIES, BUILDING EXHIBITION SEEKS TO COPE WITH DEVELOPMENT PLANS MORE THAN 70 COMPANIES, GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES UNDER ONE CEILING

**KUWAIT:** The Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of M/s National Industries Company, Dr Adel Al-Subeih, reassured that the Fifth Session of Industries and Building Exhibition seeks to cope with the new development plans of the State of Kuwait in addition to working for meeting all the needs of the local market with regard to the construction and building sector that receive the interest and concern of private housing projects or the development projects in the different sectors, by offering the latest and the most recent developments in this industry worldwide.

This came in a press statement by Dr Subeih on the occasion of finalizing the process for getting ready and the ongoing preparations for the Fifth Session of Industries and Building Exhibition which will be launched today, Monday, and continues up to the 10th day of this month of December under the auspices of His Excellency the Minister of State for Housing Affairs and organized by "Expo-Tag" for Exhibitions and Conferences and in Collaboration with M/s National Industries Company, and the participation of many governmental authorities in addition to the largest and the

most high-class and high-ranking companies and construction and building factories in the State of Kuwait and the region.

### Largest gathering

Dr Subeih said that the new session of the exhibition is the largest local gathering for the specialists in the construction, decoration and building world from both the public and private sectors.

He also added that this will give chance to the Kuwaiti citizen in order to obtain all what he wants in this connection under one ceiling, besides giving the opportunity to the participating governmental authorities to answer any queries raised by the citizens with regard to all that is relevant to building works.

Dr Subeih clarified that the success which the exhibition had witnessed in its previous session confirms to what extent that the specialized companies and organizations are confident in this wide and important gathering which will serve and support the construction and rehabilitation sector in both the State of Kuwait and the region as well. He further reassured the keenness by the exhibition to inform the citizens about the latest and



**Dalia Wafai**

most recent developments in this industry, especially those citizens who are benefiting from the housing welfare program.

Dr Subeih said that the Industries and Building Exhibition is characterized by the fact that it is privileged with several and diverse sponsorships and participations by the various relevant governmental authorities in addition to the private sector, the thing which reassures the support given by those entities to this important event which will meet the ambitions of all the interested parties in the construction building sector.



**Dr Adel Al-Subeih**

### New ideas

On the other hand, Dalia Wafai, the Executive Director of "Expo- Tag" Company for Exhibitions and Conferences, said that the Fifth Session of this Exhibition is distinguished by offering new ideas in addition to the presence of the most significant specialized companies which will provide everything that may be needed during the phases of the building process as well as the most recent and high-class products in the finishing and decoration fields in such a way that will meet the requirements of the Kuwaiti citizen and copes with his taste.

Wafai indicated that many governmental authorities besides more than Seventy (70) Companies are participating in this Exhibition which will provide every new in the finishing, decoration and contracting fields. She added that this year is Exhibition is organized in a wide space of more than 2000 square meters in order to give chance to the sponsors and participants to render whatever they want to provide. She further pointed out that the events of this Exhibition during the previous years had witnessed great attention from the Kuwaiti families, families of the diplomatic missions in the State of Kuwait,

the expats residing in Kuwait, newly married couples and the specialized firms in the construction and preparation of villas and chalets who all visited the Exhibition and had admired its high-class, high-ranking and quality products and exhibited items, particularly in the presence and participation of many specialized companies that receive a great confidence in the Kuwaiti community.

### Diverse products

Furthermore, Wafai said that the specialized companies participating in this exhibition will offer their diverse products related to the building requirements like: thermal insulation, all types of cooling and refrigeration systems, water heaters, suspended ceilings, indoor partitions, doors and windows, shutters, ceramics, all types of marble, paints, cement products, metal structures, reinforcement iron, wooden doors, all types of lifts, pre-cast concrete slabs, aluminum products, walls and skylights, electrical doors, electrical boards, all types of stones and granites, sets of toilets and glassware, kitchens and specialty materials, pipes, pipe coating and flooring, all decoration and wall materials, landscaping, wooden cabinets and all types of furniture.

## KUWAIT TIMES INTERVIEWS DR DAVID MCHARDY, PRESIDENT OF ALGONQUIN COLLEGE - KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Times recently interviewed Dr David McHardy, President of Algonquin College in Kuwait, who spoke about the programs that the college offers, its credentials and other topics.

### Kuwait Times: What programs does Algonquin College-Kuwait offer?

**Dr David McHardy:** Algonquin College in Canada is a comprehensive polytechnic and offers over 200 programs in almost every field imaginable. In Kuwait, we will initially be offering programs from our Schools of Business, Advanced Technology and Community Services and Outreach, as well as an English and Academic Foundations program that has been specifically developed for delivery here in Kuwait.

In Business, our initial offerings will focus on Management, Marketing, Entrepreneurship and e-Business and we have future plans to offer programs in Accounting, Finance and Investment. In Advanced Technology, the programs we've promoted to date include Computer Programming and Systems Technology. We have also been approved to offer programs in Interactive Multimedia Design, Internet Applications, Web Development, and Computer Engineering. We

are currently assessing which of these programs we would like to introduce next.

Our Community Services and Outreach area offers Continuing Education and Contract Training programs and we'll soon be announcing the official opening of our Training Centre. The center will initially focus on English Language Training and will then expand into other areas of interest to working adults, companies and government ministries.

### KT: How does Algonquin College - Kuwait heighten the quality of its students' experience?

**Dr McHardy:** Every aspect of what we do at Algonquin College - Kuwait (AC-Kuwait) contributes to our students getting the highest quality education and learning experience possible. The programs we deliver are of the highest quality and they are reviewed every year to ensure they maintain their relevance and currency. We have invested heavily in educational technologies. Every classroom is outfitted with interactive white boards, digital projectors, and document cameras and our learning management system provides students with 24/7 "anywhere, anytime" access to their learning materials. We hire the best people available to deliver our programs and serv-

ices and our instructors, admissions staff and student services people are all very experienced, highly skilled, and focused on student success. Everyone "goes the extra mile" as they say. We listen to our students and we work with them to build their skills and confidence. For example, our students formed a Volunteer Club and they said to our staff that they wanted to run an outreach event. Our staff worked with them and ultimately the Club members organized a well-received student-designed and student-run event through which the community benefited and the students had fun while learning lots about planning, organizing and teamwork.

### KT: What markets is Algonquin College - Kuwait targeting?

**Dr McHardy:** Canadian institutions pride themselves in being inclusive and I don't think we're going to be any different. Our goal is to be the College of choice for as broad a range of students as possible - Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, males and females. Our Diploma programs focus on recent high school graduates from all over Kuwait, some of whom will be eligible for government scholarships and some of whom will not be. In contrast, our Continuing Education programs will target

people who are probably a little older and currently employed and will focus more on the parts of Kuwait that are closest to our campus. Clearly, different kinds of programs will have different target audiences.

### KT: What kinds of credentials is Algonquin College - Kuwait offering? Will you offer different credentials in the future?

**Dr McHardy:** Right now we offer diplomas in Business and Advanced Technology that have degree pathways with other institutions. In the future, our goal is to broaden this base to include other disciplines and to offer our own applied degrees.

### KT: How does Algonquin College - Kuwait differ from other colleges and universities in Kuwait?

**Dr McHardy:** Besides being the only college or university located in Jahra and Kuwait's only Canadian college, we're affiliated with a public college that's a leader in educational technologies and international education. Our students use their mobile devices as learning tools and they may never have to buy a printed textbook, as all our texts to date have been sold as e-books. As a branch campus, our graduates will not only receive a diploma from AC-Kuwait

but also from Algonquin College in Canada. And, finally, we are a member of a global network of Algonquin College campuses. No other institution in Kuwait has a profile like ours.

### KT: What does the future hold for Algonquin College - Kuwait?

**Dr McHardy:** In Spring 2016, we will begin running our first diploma program - Business - Management and Entrepreneurship. In Summer 2016, we are planning to send two of our students to Canada for a special summer program and to offer a series of summer institutes. In Fall 2016, we will add at least three more diploma programs. By 2017, we will have added an auditorium and sports and recreation complex to our facilities and have done everything necessary to apply to become a degree-granting institution. In 2018, we will celebrate our first graduating class and our goal is to begin offering applied degree programs and open our second academic wing on campus. Over the next few years, Algonquin College's global network of branch campuses will grow and we will begin exploring student and faculty exchange opportunities with other members of our network. And that's only the beginning. We have lots of ideas and plans and look forward to a very bright future.

## BILL GATES VISITS KUWAIT FOR FULL DAY ACTIVITIES

**KUWAIT:** Bill Gates visits Kuwait today to participate in a youth dialogue session and a meeting of Abdulrahman Al-Sumait board of trustees, and will be honored with Informatics Medal for his decades-long information revolution contributions.

Gates, visiting the country at the invitation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, would be participating in dialogue session with Kuwaiti youths, organized by the Amiri Diwan, over "Youth and International Development."

The dialogue session is within His Highness the Amir's patronage of youth activities and the development of their skills, Dr Yusuf Al-Ibrahim, Amiri Diwan Advisor, said in a statement to KUNA earlier. He said the session would inspire youth over importance of development and voluntary action. The Amiri Diwan has already invited the youth to register online to participate in the dialogue session, due in Bayan Palace.

### Al-Sumait Prize

Gates, who co-chairs the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, would also take part in a meeting of the Board of Trustees of Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize for African Development, where members would examine nominees for the 2015 prize, the first since its launch two years ago.

His Highness the Amir, during the November 2013 Africa-Arab Summit in Kuwait, announced the prize after late Dr Sumait, a Kuwaiti medical doctor who dedicated his life to raising funds to support humanitarian and charitable projects in fields of health, education and food for the less fortunate in Africa.

The board of trustees, chaired by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, will discuss in their meeting in Bayan Palace how the \$1 million prize be awarded whether to an individual, an institution or more than one person.

Among the board of trustees members are Abdullateef Al-Hamad, Chairman and Director General of Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) and Dr Adnan Shahab-Eldin, Director General of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).

The subject for the 2015 prize is health, and people applying for the prize should submit their research about communicable diseases prevalent in Africa such as Ebola, Malaria and HIV. It also includes provision of medical staff, medicine, pharmaceutical and medical equipment, as well as provision of medical centers.

The prize - a cash sum, a gold medal, shield and certificate of recognition is to be awarded to individuals or institutions whose research projects or initiatives made significant advancement within field of health. The prize has two other fields: food security and education, the former aims at development of agriculture and provides solutions to environment problems hindering agricultural production development. The second field aims at providing basic and



Bill Gates

applied education, and proliferation of schools and provision of teachers and trainers.

Sumait (1947-2013) dedicated his life to helping poor and orphans in remote and destitute areas across the African continent. He spent over three decades of his life in his philanthropic work in the African continent, participating in providing care for thousands of orphans, the drilling of around 9,500 artesian wells and the establishment of 860 schools, four universities and 204 Islamic centers.

In an article published last month, Gates paid tribute for Sumait for the "remarkable man he was" although he did not have a chance to meet him. "A physician, Islamic scholar and philanthropist, Dr Al Sumait embodied Kuwait's tradition of generosity and concern for people in need, which UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon underscored last year in recognizing His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as a global 'humanitarian leader,'" he said.

### 'Informatics Medal'

Meanwhile, Gates would be honored by His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award with its 'Informatics Medal' for his contributions to information technology over the past four decades, and for standing behind innovations that led to the global information revolution. His Highness the Amir will decorate Gates with the Informatics Medal at Bayan Palace Monday, the Award added in a statement last Thursday.

The Award's Board of Trustees selected Gates for his achievements that contributed to promoting global knowledge performance, after he manifested great skills and interest in computer programming when he was only 13. In 1975, at the age of 20, Gates and his friend Paul Allen founded Microsoft, that came to be the world's largest software business in a short period, the statement added.

It noted that Informatics Medal is the highest prize offered by the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award to a public figure or a juridical person that has played a prominent role in human development. — KUNA

## ARAB MINISTERS OF YOUTH COMMEND JABER STADIUM

### OFFICIALS URGE INT'L BODIES TO DROP KUWAITI SPORTS SUSPENSION

**KUWAIT:** The Arab ministers of youth and sports praised the facilities of Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium which meet the world's latest standards. The ministers, accompanied by Kuwait's Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, paid an inspection visit to the stadium on the sidelines of the 59th meeting of the executive office of the Arab ministers of youth and sport council.

Sheikh Salman said the ministers were impressed by the state-of-the-art technologies employed at this sports edifice which was named after late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. "The venue will see the Kuwait sports taking a new momentum on December 18 when a celebration will be held to give a positive portrait of sports in Kuwait," he pointed out.

On the meeting of the executive office, the minister said the conferees were unanimous in supporting the stance of Kuwait on the controversial decision to suspend Kuwait Olympic Committee (KOC) from taking part in the overseas sports activities. He stressed that the sports legislations of Kuwait are in keeping with the provisions of the International Olympic Charter.

### Right to participate

The conferees asked the international sports organizations to unban Kuwait's participation as early as possible and not to deprive the Kuwaiti sportspeople of their right to take part in sports events abroad, Sheikh Salman added.

Tunisian Minister of Youth and Sports Maher Ben Dhia said the Jaber stadium is the most beautiful sports facility he has ever seen. "The stadium is a pearl and a bright page in the history of sports in Kuwait and the Arab world at large," Ben Dhia said in statements to KUNA.

The Tunisian minister voiced hope that the Stadium will host international soccer events and resume contribution to the promotion of sports in Kuwait soon. Similar statements were made by Secretary General of the UAE General Authority of Youth and Sports Welfare Ibrahim Abdulmalek, member of the authority Marawan Al-Marzouqi, and the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ahmad Alhendawi. The meeting of the executive office reviewed the recommendations of the technical committees of the council of Arab ministers of youth and sports as well as sports issues of common concern for the Arab countries.

### Kuwait's suspension

On Saturday, Arab youth and sports ministers called on international sports institutions to backpedal on their decision to suspend Kuwaiti sports activities, and to allow Kuwaiti athletes to partake in world sports events "under the flag of their country".

The ministers voiced, in a joint statement issued following the 59th session of their Executive Office, their full solidarity with the State of Kuwait in this regard, and appreciated its efforts to support its sports activities and overhaul sports laws.

They lauded Kuwait's relentless respect of international regulations, and effective contributions to sup-



**KUWAIT:** Information and youth affairs minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah and Arab ministers of youth and sports tour the Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. — KUNA

porting regional, Arab and international sports, hoping that international sports organizations would drop their decision to suspend Kuwaiti sports activities. However, they pointed to their keenness on the respect of international regulations, mainly the Olympic Charter, while stressing the sovereign role of States and independence sports bodies.

### Kuwait's flag

Speaking to reporters following the meeting, Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud said the meeting had mainly produced the full solidarity of Arab countries with Kuwait in the face of the "arbitrary suspension imposed on Kuwaiti athletes who cannot participate (in sports events) under the flag of Kuwait."

He added that the Arab youth and sports ministers had called on international organizations to "drop suspension at an early date", and underlined the principle of developing Kuwaiti sports legislations and law in a way that could be an Arab example to follow. The minister highly commended this Arab solidarity with, and support to, the State of Kuwait in this regard.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Executive Office of the Council of Arab Youth and Sports Ministers Khaled Abdulaziz reiterated the council's support to the State of Kuwait versus the suspension of its sports activities.

He said in a press statement that the council had urged international institutions to rethink about their recent decision to suspend Kuwaiti sports activities, and to allow Kuwaiti athletes to partake in world sports events "under the flag of their country" as soon as possible so that they could join next Olympic Games in Brazil.

### Sports infrastructure

Reaffirming Arab backing to Kuwait in this regard,

Abdulaziz spoke highly of Kuwait's high-level sports infrastructure and win of several Olympic medals. Hailing Kuwaiti national teams' participation in international sports events, he blasted the international decision to suspend Kuwaiti sports activities, saying that it was not carefully considered.

Abdulaziz stressed the necessity of listening to Kuwait's official viewpoint in this context, calling for an early meeting between international institutions and Kuwait's team led by Sheikh Salman Sabah and involving sports bodies and members of parliament in order to "review the decision and to wipe out any misunderstanding", thus paving the way for Kuwaiti athletes to join next sports competitions. On October 27, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had suspended Kuwaiti sports activities under the pretext that Kuwait's local sports laws run counter with the Olympic Charter.

### Decrying violence

Arab youth and sports ministers have asked Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud to set up two committees; one decrying violence and extremism, and the other supporting youth. Speaking to reporters following the 59th session of the Executive Office of the Council of Arab Youth and Sports Ministers, the office's chairman Khaled Abdulaziz said the office had decided to set up a committee led by Sheikh Salman Sabah to develop appropriate mechanisms for launching an anti-terrorism campaign similar to the Council of the European Union's anti-hatred campaign. He said the step was the fruit of discussions and agreements with the Council of the European Union in this regard. Another one-year youth-backing committee, also sited by the Kuwaiti minister, was set up with a view to developing fresh Arab youth policies, he added. — KUNA

## NBK OPENS NEW BRANCH AT KOC

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) opened yesterday a new branch at Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Head Office to provide its employees with full services. The opening of the new branch comes in tandem with NBK's long term relationship with KOC and all national oil companies.

The opening was attended by Hashem Sayed Hashem, KOC Chief Executive Officer, Salah Al-Fulajji, NBK-Kuwait Chief Executive Officer, Saad Al-Azmi, Deputy CEO for Administrative and Financial Affairs at KOC, Pradeep Handa, NBK General Manager, Foreign Corporate, Oil and Trade Finance Group, Mohammed Al-Othman, NBK

Deputy General Manager, Consumer Banking Group, Suweileh Al-Mutairi, Manager for Financial Accounts and Services group at KOC, Khaled Al-Ajmi, Team leader Financial Payments, Financial Accounts and Services Group at KOC and other officials representing NBK and KOC were also present at the opening ceremony.

Commenting on the occasion, Fulajji said: "We are happy to be the present at KOC to support its employees with all the banking solutions they need."

"NBK is the banking partner for all of Kuwait's oil companies. NBK's relationship

with KOC and the national oil companies extends for decades," he added.

NBK will be the only bank at the KOC Head Office and will provide KOC employees with full and exclusive banking services and products tailor-made to meet their needs and requirements."

In his turn, Hashim said: "The opening of NBK Branch will eventually further expands the mutually beneficial and fruitful relationship existing between NBK and KOC as well as other national oil companies."

NBK continues to enjoy collectively the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the tenth consecutive time.

NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York, Europe, GCC, Middle East, Singapore as well as China (Shanghai).

## ZAIN MAIN SPONSOR OF ROADRUSH FOR 2ND YEAR

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its main sponsorship of the 6th edition of RoadRush. The motorsport activity, which exclusively aims at women, takes place from November 2015 until February 2016.

Zain's support to this unique racing competition comes in line with the company's core commitment to Kuwaiti youth's various interests and activities, which resembles the company's endless confidence in the competencies of youth and their capabilities in excelling in different fields.

RoadRush aims at encouraging and inspiring women to participate in motorsports that are usually associated with men. The event provides an ideal opportunity for women to showcase their talents in an exciting series of events that involve several thrilling activities taking place in Kuwait and Bahrain.

RoadRush will feature a number of activities that are related to car racing, in which women with different skill levels can participate and enjoy. The event already kick-started with a Karting race that witnessed the participation of many



teams who competed in a thrilling atmosphere at Kuwait's SIRBB Circuit, including the company's own "Zain team".

Additionally, the event will witness the organization of the main race that will be held at Bahrain International Circuit next January, where professional participants will enjoy an experience that is considered as a real test to their poten-

tials in the motorsport field.

Zain's sponsorship of this thrilling event stems from its utmost responsibility of youth's talent development and the sports sector, which comes in line with its Corporate Social Responsibility strategy. The company will spare no efforts in supporting causes and initiatives that spread awareness on certain areas that concern the Kuwaiti youth.



In Brief

KUWAIT, UN SIGN YOUTH SUPPORT MOU

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait and the UN signed Saturday a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) over the support of youth. The MoU was signed by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah and UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth Ahmad Alhendawi, on sidelines of a meeting on youth volunteering in the face of terrorism. —KUNA



NBK PROMOTES SERVICES

**KUWAIT:** The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) showcased its banking business services during a seminar held recently at 'Sirdab Lab' to support small and medium business entrepreneurs. During the seminar, NBK officials gave a demonstration to services it offers to this category, including the e-commercial gate mystore2go.com which offers business owners the opportunity to display and sell their products easily. NBK offers this service for the first time in cooperation with Nexxus Payment Group.



FIRE PREVENTION COURSES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) held two training courses in cooperation with the Interior Ministry, including one on the basics of fire prevention in private buildings which saw 13 participants. The second course, titled the '6th Road Accidents Course for GCC States,' took place in Kabd with participation of 16 trainees. The courses will conclude on December 17, 2015, KFSD said in a statement.



Photo

of the day



**KUWAIT:** A man tries to help two camels cross a road in Kabd yesterday. Kuwait Camel Race Club hosted the annual camel race yesterday. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



**KUWAIT:** Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah is pictured with students at the exhibition. — KUNA photos

SPECIAL NEEDS INTEGRAL PART OF SOCIETY: FARWANIYA GOVERNOR

**KUWAIT:** Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah said that people with special needs form an integral part of society, highlighting Kuwait's prioritization of the rights of those with disabilities. Sheikh

Faisal made the remarks yesterday while attending a special exhibition entitled, "A Brighter Future", marking International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The Farwaniya Governor said that the exhibition is a testa-

ment to societal contributions made by special needs people, calling them a valuable segment of the population. Human development is the benchmark by which all nations are measured, he added. —KUNA



GULF BANK SPONSORS ENGINEERING COLLEGE'S 'VERSARY CELEBRATION

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank was a silver sponsorship of the 40th Anniversary celebration of Kuwait University's (KU) College of Engineering and Petroleum. The event featured a number of activities, including the Kuwait Global Technopreneurship Challenge 2015, which was designed to gather some of the most creative minds, investors and decision makers to work together and help turn bold ideas into reality. The event included workshops, final round challenge, then the conference and award ceremony.

During the conference, a 'camp' was held on the university campus where selected teams worked intensively together and learn under the supervision of a distinguished group of academics and industry leaders how to improve their opportunities to commercialize their projects.

The conference featured three tasks carefully chosen to represent key priorities for Kuwait, the region and the world. These challenges were: make solar energy economical, advance health informatics, and advance personalized learning. On the final day of the event teams competed by presenting their marketing pitches to representatives from the local business community and three winning

teams were selected.

The main objective of Kuwait Global Technopreneurship Challenge conference was to encourage entrepreneurial thinking and develop regional and international collaboration, while honing business skills of Kuwait's students and youth. The conference was preceded by an intensive introductory online training course on 1 July 2015, to motivate young people and students all over the world to face 14 grand challenges for engineering in the 21st century.

The training course was conducted under the supervision of expert academics from Kuwait University, and Taylor's University Malaysia, in collaboration with colleagues from other countries around the world to help participants face technical challenges more effectively. To date, 620 participants from 70 countries have enrolled in the training, including 180 from Kuwait.

Gulf Bank's sponsorship of this event is part of its long-term strategy of reaching out to youth through ongoing programs which provide support that further their learning and development. To find out more about Gulf Bank's initiatives and programs, visit the Bank's bilingual website at [www.e-gulfbank.com](http://www.e-gulfbank.com).



**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) celebrated the graduation of a new batch of employees who recently took part in the new employees' development program.

Legalese

WEEKENDS, HOLIDAYS  
AND OVERTIME

By Fajer Ahmed

Kuwait "new" labor law was written in 2010 to demolish the violations that were regularly occurring from employers towards their employees or should I say towards the members of the private sector. Unfortunately though because the law seems to be fairly new there seems to be some confusion on its articles and their application from my readers/clients. Some companies will do everything they can to save as much money as possible, and unfortunately to some, this means over working their employees, without taking into account that this can affect their business in many ways, creating a negative outcome instead of a positive one.

I would like to share with you an email I got from one of my readers, as the concerns he had are reoccurring in the emails I receive:

## Weekend work and overtime

Q. I have viewed some versions of Kuwait labor law, and I am seeking your clarifications for the below:

1. Our employer is calling us to work during weekends, and is not reimbursing us with days off or overtime, is this a violation of the law?

Yes. According to Kuwait labor law you should be working six days maximum at eight hours a day. Now most employers give their employees Saturday as a paid day off. If they call you in one day of the weekend that is fine, but if you are working seven days a week, then that would be considered a violation.

2. What should I be expecting as remuneration for the days I work on weekends?

According to Article (67) of the law, you should be expecting 1.5 of what you are usually paid per day (divide your salary by 26) plus a day off instead of the one you worked.

3. Is it considered a violation that my employer is claiming that I am absent on public holidays, and deducting from my salary? He states that our company is operating under a normal schedule during Eid holidays and in the case that I do not show up to work, he will deduct from my salary.

Your employer is clearly violating the law. Holidays stated in Article 68, are as follows:

- a- Higiira New Year: 1 day
- b- Isra' and Mi'raj day: 1 day
- c- Eid Al-Fitr: 3 days
- d- Waqfat Arafat: 1 day
- e- Eid Al-Adha: 3 days
- f- Prophet's Birthday (Al-Mawlid Al-Nabawi): 1 day
- g- National Day: 1 day
- h- Gregorian New Year: 1 day

If you are working any of the above days then you should receive 2x what you are usually paid for a day's work plus a day off.

## Absconding vs canceling a contract

4- If points 1 - 3 are considered as violations from the employer towards employee, can I terminate my work contract?

Theoretically according to Article 48 of the law you can terminate your employment contract without providing a notice, but from experience you should really consider your options and take all precautions before proceeding to just not show up to work. Not showing up to work can put you in a really unstable position, your employer will be able to file an absconding case against you. Absconding cases in Kuwait can be very serious, so before you decide to terminate the contract I suggest you do the following:

1. make sure you have proof that you are showing up to work in a timely manner (maybe an attendance sheet?)

2. get a copy of your contract (Arabic or English)

3. you have proof of the violations (maybe an attendance sheet and a bank statement, so we can prove the money you are receiving from your employer are not corresponding to the hours you work.)

4. if you have worked on the above then I suggest you consult with a lawyer that you trust, it is always better to go to a lawyer before you get in trouble. If you cannot afford this step, you can email me and no promises but I always try to help when I can, if not then just skip this step and go to step 5 and/or 6.

5. I suggest you send an email to your manager stating their violations and the reason you are terminating your contract.

6. File a complaint in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Usually lawyers can do this for you, but you can do it yourself as well. The ministry will notify your employer and call him in to negotiate with you. Of course, just like I mentioned above, this is also very theoretical and in practicality does not work. Often, the employer will not show up to the negotiation or will not be notified at the correct address, as some companies do not write their actual address. So if all fails here, or you do not come to agreement the case is referred to court.

I hope the above has been useful to you and to others in the same situation as you, if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to email me ask@fajertelawyer.com.

INTERIOR MINISTRY  
SIGNS CONTRACT  
FOR E-PASSPORTS

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior yesterday signed a contract for supplying the new e-passport as part of the security institution's persistent efforts to apply the latest technology for better services to citizens, according to a statement.

The supplier company briefed the ministry's Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahad on the plan of carrying out the project and the date of delivery, the Security Media Department of the ministry added in the statement.

Fahd lauded the new achievement which will have positive outcome for security, and the services offered to citizens, as a step on the way of completing the modernization plan being implemented by the security establishment. He also stressed the necessity of abolishing all obstacles and taking the necessary measures for completing the e-passport project as soon as possible.

Senior officials of the Interior Ministry attended the meeting with officials of the supplier company. The contract covers designing and producing the new passports in Germany, to be delivered in six months. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Firefighters tackle a blaze at a basement in Industrial Shuwaikh yesterday.

INTERIOR MINISTRY WARNS  
AGAINST FAKE MAIDS OFFICES  
NO INJURIES IN BASEMENT FIRE

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Director General of the Interior Ministry's Residency Detectives Affairs Department Brigadier Saud Abdallah Al-Khader, and Director General of Relations and Security Information General Department Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash yesterday warned citizens and expatriates against dealing with fake domestic help offices. They added in a statement that the ministry has recently noticed that some people made ads over social media and other means, offering domestic help services on hourly basis. They added that this activity is considered 'swindling acts' by people who do not have the proper licenses to offer household employment services.

Brig Khader urged citizens and expats to deal only with offices licensed by the Interior ministry so

that they do not fall victim for fraudsters.

He said concerned authorities are coordinating to carry out campaigns to uncover fake offices and arrest workers in violation of labor regulations. He added that concerned authorities were contacted in order to ban such ads "which contribute to the rise of crime rates," adding that there is a joint team from the residency detectives and residency affairs departments to monitor such illegal ads and take legal action against them.

## Shuwaikh fire

Seven fire stations battled a huge blaze that broke out in a basement used as a food stuff warehouse in Industrial Shuwaikh area yesterday morning. It was the second fire that took place in the same area in the last 48 hours. The basement contained a

warehouse which contained furniture and housewares, stored in a way that obstructed firemen's activity. They were able to isolate the items however and prevent the flames from reaching them. State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah followed the efforts of firemen to make sure they remained safe. No injuries were reported.

## Factories' crackdown

The environment police carried out a surprise visits to Shuaiba area in cooperation with the Environment Public Authority (EPA), during which it discovered several violations in factories that did not complete the environmental conditions and standards. Tickets were issued against six factories, and legal procedures are being taken to guarantee compliance with the industrial activity conditions.

MUNICIPALITY DENIES HALTING  
CAMPING LICENSES FOR EXPATS

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality's official spokesperson Nadia Al-Sherida denied social media and media reports about halting camping licenses for non-Kuwaitis and stressed that licenses were still being issued to both Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis. "The municipality only followed some strict measures to prevent leasing camps to others. Some non-Kuwaitis had been using several IDs to get licenses to pitch camps and then rent them to others," she explained, noting that the new regulations will prevent such leasing, especially since municipality inspectors are always present in various camping areas. "If licensed beneficiaries rent out camps for others or use them in violation of the regulations, the camps will be immediately removed and legal action will be taken against them," she underlined.

## State budget

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is considering funding the state budget with one billion dinars to be given in two phases - half a billion in the current fiscal year and half in the coming one (2016-2017), well-informed oil sources said. The social security authority is also expected to study its contribution in supporting the state budget by issuing special bonds. Notably, the finance ministry has recently resorted to using state reserves.

## New HQ

Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) said that its current headquarters in Sharq would be used as the Capital prevention center once it moves to its new headquarters in Mishref next year. The old building will also include a museum showing the history of firefighting in Kuwait.

KUWAIT BANS BIRD  
IMPORTS FROM  
TUNISIA, FRANCE

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) has banned live bird imports from Tunisia and France for the outbreak of West Nile fever in the two countries. Acting PAAAFR Director General Nabila Al-Khalil Faisal Al-Hasawi issued the decision yesterday, providing that all incoming consignments will be subjected to the PAAF's requirements and restrictions, in line with the relevant procedures of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the veterinary quarantine systems in Kuwait and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In case infectious or epidemic diseases are spotted, a shipment will be rejected and the importer will be committed to return it to the source country, Hasawi stressed. The decision was taken against the backdrop of OIE recent reports on outbreak of WNF in Tunisia and France.—KUNA

## Payroll alternative

Speaking on the sidelines of the Arab Conference for Mining, Oil and Petrochemicals Employees, Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Labor Union Faisal Al-Kandari stressed that oil employees in Kuwait have many concerns, such as applying the strategic payroll alternative program on them. "This program will cost the oil sector its ability to attract nationals," he warned, urging the Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh to re-stabilize the oil sector because it was already suffering from losing technically skilled staff members. He also stressed that the Kuwait Labor Union would not stop protecting the rights of laborers working in various fields and sectors.

## Cleaning campaign

Cleaning and road blockage teams in the Capital municipality removed a number of abandoned vehicles from Shuwaikh and Rai during a campaign carried out recently.

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## Crime

Report

## MAN ARRESTED FOR HITTING POLICE CAR

**KUWAIT:** A citizen deliberately collided with a patrol car in an attempt to escape between Egaila and Jaber Al-Ali. A police officer said that while a traffic patrol was roaming the streets, a luxury car was noticed not respecting road traffic lanes, so the driver was asked to stop. The driver stopped, but when the officer walked towards him, he drove his car in reverse, hit the patrol car and drove the wrong way. A chase ensued and the driver was arrested. A security source said the citizen did not give an excuse for what he did, and kept repeating the word "enough".

## Man ran over in fight

A 20-year-old man was taken to Jahra Hospital after being run over by his friend who came to help him in Oyoum during a fight. Those involved are being arrested. The man wanted to help his friend by scaring others and keeping them away, but he accidentally hit him instead.

## Salon customer 'attacked'

A citizen got involved in a verbal exchange with a beauty salon owner and ended up being drenched. The citizen went to the beauty salon to dye her hair, but the next day she returned to complain that the color went dull and pale. This made the salon owner angry, who pinned the citizen and asked workers to bring a bucket full of water mixed with a substance and poured it over her head and body, then kicked her out, according to her statements. The citizen filed a complaint, and a security source said what was poured was water and soap.

## Fugitives caught

A man and woman were arrested in Mahboula. The man is wanted to serve a five-year jail sentence and the woman a 10-year sentence in a drugs case. Policemen found drugs and drug paraphernalia on them. Both were sent to concerned authorities. Meanwhile, Ahmadi police arrested a wanted citizen for a KD 90,000 debt. He was sent to the civil implementation department.

## Drug possession

An Egyptian residency law violator had shabu and hashish with him when he arrived at a checkpoint in Fahd Al-Ahmad and was arrested. The suspect attempted to flee on foot but was brought under control and sent to the Drug Control General Directorate (DCGD). Meanwhile, policemen arrested four citizens under the influence of drugs in Sharq. They had seven envelopes suspected of containing drugs. The four were in a car that was stopped and were found under the influence. They were sent to DCGD.

## Roommate robbed

An Egyptian man accused his roommate of stealing KD 780 from their residence in Maidan Hawally, and filed a complaint at the area's police station.

—Al-Anbaa and Al-Rai

## NEW TARIFF FOR ELECTRICITY, MAX CONSUMPTION EYED

**KUWAIT:** The Supreme Planning Council recently submitted to the Cabinet a full vision on current water and electricity consumption rates and the challenges the oil sector is facing. The vision includes 14 recommendations to conserve electricity and water as well as reducing reliance on oil derivatives to generate electricity.

The report, prepared by a joint committee comprising of elements from the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW), Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), Environment Public Authority (EPA), Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Kuwait University (KU), Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the National Technology Company and the technical apparatus for studying technical initiatives and projects, recommended:

- \* Reconsidering current prices and subsidies to increase fuel and electricity prices according to actual rates and encourage citizens to rationalize consumption.
- \* Adjusting collection methods and setting a limit to maximum consumption rates.
- \* Applying programmed cutting policies in case of exceeding the maximum limit and delay in paying consumption bills.
- \* Using more alternative energy to reduce reliance on oil derivatives in generating electricity and desalinating water.
- \* Providing more effective systems to control imported electrical appliances to make sure they are power-saving.
- \* Extending the Supreme Petroleum Council's liabilities to include responsibility for other sources of energy.
- \* Assessing the solar power use experience KFAS implemented in Zahra.
- \* Importing the latest technology to execute new projects and mandating the government and citizens to use them to stop wasting energy.
- \* Boosting public awareness concerning consumption rates.
- \* Passing new legislations that ban importing non-saving electrical appliances.
- \* Using modern technology to recycle water.
- \* Provide land, factories and raw material to encourage manufacturing appliances that help conserve power.
- \* Using alternative power in industries.
- \* Strictly imposing articles 122 and 123 of the environment law concerning environment-friendly specifications.

In addition, the National Technology Company offered building a number of solar power plants according to BOT systems offering at least 20 percent of those plants' shares for bidding amongst citizens so that the produced power could be handed over to the government to be distributed to citizens at subsidized prices. —Al-Anbaa

## OWNER OF CAR USED IN MOSQUE ATTACK DENIES BELONGING TO IS

**KUWAIT:** Jarrah Nimr, the owner of the car used in the Imam Al-Sadeq mosque attack, said he does not belong to the Islamic State (IS) and made an oath on this. "I do not belong to any party - Daesh, Salaf or Brotherhood. I am a Muslim, that is all, as Allah called me," he said. "Daesh has the ideology of the Khawarij and has spread corruption on earth. They strayed away from Muslims and their rulers, and brought misery to Muslims, and they distorted the name of religion. I am innocent from them and their ideology, and I do not support the criminal acts that are taking place around the world," Nimr said.



Al-Jarida



Al-Anbaa

## EARTH INSECTS

By Saleh Al-Saheyyi

**I**S militants are not actually those we see traversing deserts or wandering on various city streets fully armed with weapons of death around their necks or waists with very long hair and thick beards. Those are mere followers. They are more like IS' lice, because all its troops comprise of lice, fleas and young lice who are completely expendable if they happen to perish or be killed. They were actually sent there to be killed and 'fumigated' by allied forces bombers. There is no problem about that. On the contrary, that is the exact point of sending them, so as to be used as an excuse for major powers fighting IS to chase its members from one place to another, and on the other hand, get rid of those worthless scum and insects.

IS is not what we see. It is rather what we do not and what can only be seen by those who prepared, equipped, trained and armed it, inviting both the misled and the idiots to fund it and man it with those seeking paradise through killing and slaughter. Therefore, IS will always remain alive until the mission is accomplished.

IS is more like a flag bearer who advances before other troops, preparing new lands for new projects

thought of by its creators so that the latter can come to launch such projects. This is what we are seeing and experiencing nowadays. Had it not been for IS, all those complications we see on land, in seas and in the skies, where mighty powers as well as regional Arab countries, would not have interfered in what might lead to a third world war that would put an end to several tiny ones going on here and there without achieving major powers' interests so far. Such small wars are, in a way, doing more harm to those powers. Therefore, their interference has become a must to defend their major interests.

Hence came the idea of forming IS after Al-Qaeda's role was completed by attacking the World Trade Center in New York on 9/11, justifying US interference in Afghanistan. We have to believe that major powers cannot go on without wars that act as a lifeblood they use to strengthen their muscles, support their economies and are used to testing their weapons, because new weapons are not manufactured to be stacked in storehouses. Stored weapons are 'emasculated' ones and those powers never emasculate theirs. —Translated by Kuwait Times



## KIB CELEBRATES DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

**KUWAIT:** As part of Kuwait International Bank's (KIB) leading social responsibility program, the bank participated in the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities hosted by the Ideal Education School. The celebration was organized in light of the United Nations' commemoration of that day in 1992.

On this occasion, the Head of Corporate Communications at KIB, Nawaf Najia stated, "the participation of KIB in the Ideal Education School's celebration stems from a series of initiatives developed by the bank, as part of its CSR program that looks after people with disabilities who are known for their strong determination to achieve and excel, and for their vital presence locally and internationally." "Therefore, they keep on raising Kuwait's flag high in the Arab world and even on a global scale, in addition to breaking records in various competitions, be it sports, scientific or art," he added.

He also mentioned, "The observance of this international day is the least that can be done for around one

billion people with special needs worldwide." He also pointed out that KIB exerts a great effort to support them financially and morally on one hand, while making sure to accommodate people with disabilities into the society and increase social awareness about the positive effect of their participation in every aspect of the community on the other hand.

Najia concluded by thanking the Ideal Education School for their much appreciated efforts and ongoing aspiration to develop the potentials of kids with disabilities by tailoring special programs and outdoor activities that help build their confidence and independence, as well as nurture their talent and give them a chance to spend their spare time in something useful. He also praised the role of private and governmental institutions in Kuwait for their joint efforts to stand up for the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

Abdelrahman, and the second in the name of my colleague, a Shiite from the Al-Qallaf family, so if had something like this in mind, would I give Abdelrahman the car that is registered in my name?" he asked. "I prayed on Friday (the day of the attack) in the mosque next to our house, then I went to my workplace at Fahd Al-Ahmad Co-op. I returned for iftar at home, performed taraweeh, then returned back to work, and did not go back home until midnight. I then had sahoor, prayed Fajr and slept. Special forces then turned up near our house, so I put on my dishdasha and went out for them. This is all what happened with me," he said. —Al-Rai



Al-Qabas

## NEW RAZI HOSPITAL: A MODEL

By Iqbal Al-Ahmad

**I** think that during the next five years, many major projects in Kuwait will be completed, such as roads, hospitals, universities and cultural centers, and then we will feel the clear difference between the current situation and the complaints that come with it shrouded with despair and disappointment, to a more comfortable situation.

When the traffic flow gets smooth when the new huge roads network is completed, all those who live in Kuwait will see a drop in worries, complaints and frustration everywhere because of traffic jams. And when we see prestigious hospitals built according to clear medical standards, as I saw in the new Razi Hospital, it is a scene that makes us proud and hope that many things will change, and a large amount of daily problems that turned us to people who always complaint will disappear, if the projects are finished according to the best standards and specifications as buildings and also as an administration and compliance with the law.

The new Razi Hospital caught my attention with its high-standard rooms furnished according to high medical standards, and this is what we missed in other hospitals that used to be furnished according to the mood and taste of some administrative officials, which makes the room design and furniture far from the requirements of sterilization, hygiene and patient comfort. The rooms' color, plan, dividing and material used in curtains, chairs and doors, put hope in me that we are moving in a new direction when we hand concerned authorities the responsibility of furnishing from A to Z, and the new Razi Hospital is an example of the upcoming projects which makes us happy and hopeful, and gives us some pleasure that has been absent from us in previous years.

There is a proposal to health ministry officials that guarantees good services in all hospitals through rooms, which is to collect at least KD 50 as deposit for rooms, then the responsible employee goes to the rooms to have the patient or who represents him sign a list after inspecting everything in the room of furniture, even the walls, and signs on it being free from any damage including any scribbling or stickers before the patient leaves, and if any damage is detected, a deduction will be made accordingly.

The new Razi Hospital is a sample that made me happy and hopeful, and such small things are what guarantee continued hygiene and quality services presented by the health ministry, which some people do not hesitate to destroy with regret, as well as turning rooms to rundown places, when the patient or his family behave in a way that reflects the standard of their upbringing and environment, so they create a mess, burn, paste stickers on the walls and tear things down, and these are irresponsible behaviors.

It is enough for us as people to abuse public property, and enough laxity by the government in supervision and bringing this abuse to account. The saying goes "hit the pocket, everybody behaves". Instant citations at the site of violation restores to us the country of law and leadership.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Anbaa

## WILL DIVISION WEAKEN OR STRENGTHEN US?

By Sami Al-Nisf

**T**owards the beginning of last century, the Ottoman Empire was at its weakest and declared bankruptcy more than once. It even stopped paying the wages of its employees and military. It lost wars against the weakest of the Balkan states, which won their independence, and then began to be described as 'The Sick Man of Europe'. Such weakness compelled it give away the cities of Erzurum, Trabzon, Izmir and its islands according to the Treaty of Sevres in 1921. However, no sooner had the Ottoman State divided, it regained its powers under Ataturk, who soon led Turkey to victory, defeating its enemies in the battles of Sakarya, Gallipoli and others, reclaiming Turkish territories, and then Turkey ended up as one of the mightiest countries in Europe and the world.

The Soviet Union formed after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 was more like a stone-legged giant that got invaded by Hitler in its own backyard. It was economically and scientifically weak until it was defeated in Afghanistan by tribesmen and lost many republics and allies in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, federal Russia has grown much mightier and regained the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine and achieved the tsars' dreams of having access to warm-water ports. Russia is in Syria to stay and it most probably will deploy land troops to support its existence and make Assad stay in power.

Some Arab countries are currently under threat of being divided now, and co-existence is becoming impossible amongst their peoples. Arab minds view division as leading to weakening those countries because of the traditional story in our minds about single sticks' weakness and how they become unbreakable when bound together. Well, the truth might be the opposite. We might get a group of lion-like states out of dividing some west Asian Arab countries that equal the strength of the Asian tigers like Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea that got stronger by division. To have young Arab groups competing and cooperating is much better than having flabby old lions fighting each other, and who are not, all together, a match to Israel alone.

To prove that parts can sometimes be stronger than the whole, just think about the unlimited success Arabs individually achieve in the West and how they get weak as soon as they get back to their own countries. —Translated by Kuwait Times

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Lebanese soldier recalls Al-Qaeda kidnap ordeal



ISTANBUL: Musicians from Syria play Arabic songs for money in central Istanbul's Istiklal Avenue, the main shopping road of Istanbul, on Saturday. According to Turkish authorities, more than 2.2 million Syrian refugees are in Turkey, after they had fled civil war in their country, now in its fifth year. — AP

## 32 IS FIGHTERS DEAD IN US-LED RAIDS

### 13 CIVILIANS KILLED IN RUSSIAN AIR STRIKES

**BEIRUT:** At least 32 Islamic State group fighters were killed yesterday in apparent US-led coalition raids on Syria as President Bashar Al-Assad slammed Britain's decision to participate in air strikes. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said at least 32 fighters had been killed in some 15 strikes on the IS stronghold of Raqqa province in northern Syria.

The monitor's head, Rami Abdel Rahman, said at least 40 jihadists were also wounded in the strikes, which hit IS headquarters and bases to the north, east and southeast of provincial capital Raqqa city. The city is the de facto Syrian capital of the group, which calls the large stretches of territory it controls in Syria and neighboring Iraq an Islamic "caliphate".

Abdel Rahman said the casualty figures were collected from a single hospital and the final toll from the air strikes could rise. Raqqa is frequently the target of air strikes by the US-led coalition, as well as the Syrian air force, and Russian warplanes that began an air campaign in Syria in late September. The US-led coalition has been targeting IS in Syria since September last year, expanding a campaign that began with raids in neighboring Iraq. Its operations have expanded further in recent days, partly in response to the deadly

attacks in Paris claimed by IS.

Britain voted on Wednesday to join the coalition's strikes in Syria, after a heated debate in the country's parliament and with the staunch backing of Prime Minister David Cameron. And German lawmakers on Friday approved plans to join the military action against the group in Syria.

#### Air Strikes

In an interview published yesterday in Britain's The Sunday Times newspaper, Assad slammed London's decision to begin strikes in Syria as "illegal" and said its actions would cause "terrorism" to spread. "It will be harmful and illegal and it will support terrorism as happened after the coalition started its operation a year or so (ago)," he told the newspaper. Terror, he said, was like a cancer which needed to be tackled with a "comprehensive" strategy which would involve working with troops on the ground.

Britain began its bombing campaign early on Thursday, hitting an oilfield held by IS just hours after the parliamentary vote. Damascus has repeatedly slammed the US-led coalition as ineffective and illegal, saying it cannot uproot IS without coordinating with the Syrian government. Russia, a staunch Assad ally, began its

strikes with the government's permission and has coordinated its raids with regime forces. It says its raids focus on IS and other "terrorists", but other rebels and their backers accuse Moscow of targeting moderate and Islamist opposition fighters over jihadists.

Yesterday, the Observatory said 13 civilians, among them two children, had been killed in apparent Russian air strikes on the town of Zamalka, east of Damascus. According to the monitor, Russian strikes have killed more than 1,500 people, including 419 IS fighters, but also nearly 500 civilians, since they began on Sept 30.

IS rules the territory under its control with an iron fist, brutally punishing those who challenge its authority or violate its harsh interpretation of Islam. Yesterday, the Observatory said the group had executed a media activist in the city of Deir Ezzor by tying him to two vehicles which were then driven in opposite directions. IS accused the activist of "collaborating with the Crusader coalition" after discovering broadcasting equipment during a raid on his home, the Observatory said. Local activists have become a key source of information about life under IS, with journalists unable to access territory it controls. — AFP

## OBAMA URGES AMERICANS 'TO NOT GIVE IN TO FEAR'

**WASHINGTON:** US President Barack Obama will make a rare primetime address Sunday laying out how he plans to keep Americans safe and defeat the Islamic State group, days after 14 people were shot dead in California. Obama's top law enforcement officer, US Attorney General Loretta Lynch, said the president planned to give reassurance to a US public that has become jittery about more possible terror attacks on the home front. "The president understands the country is very concerned about this issue, and I think what you'll hear from him is a discussion about what the government is doing to ensure our highest priority," Lynch told NBC television's "Meet the Press" program.

"You may hear him call on Congress to review measures and take action as well," Lynch said on Sunday. "But I think what you'll hear the president say is to call on the American people to not give into fear." Obama declared Saturday that the United States "will not be terrorized," as IS praised the married couple behind the mass shooting in San Bernardino as "soldiers" of its self-proclaimed caliphate.

#### An Exhortation to 'Uphold Our Values'

"We are Americans. We will uphold our values - a free and open society," the president said in his weekly address. Investigators are combing over evidence and looking into the background of Syed Farook, 28, and his 29-year-old Pakistani wife Tashfeen Malik, who opened fire Wednesday at a social services center. The FBI said federal agents raided a property in Riverside, California, but declined to provide details.

The FBI is investigating the shooting as a possible act of terrorism. NBC News reported that the FBI had searched the home of Enrique Marquez, a friend of Farook's who originally bought the assault rifles used in the shooting but who is not considered a suspect. If the shooting is proven to be terror-related, it would be the deadliest such assault on American soil since the Sept 11, 2001 attacks.

Obama last gave an Oval Office address in Aug 2010 to mark the end of US combat operations in Iraq. In addition to an update on the probe, Obama will "discuss the broader threat of terrorism, including the nature of the threat, how it has evolved, and how we

will defeat it," the White House said. Top security officials have indicated that the two deceased suspects had been radicalized. But the White House and the FBI say there are no signs they were part of a larger group or terrorist cell.

In an English radio broadcast, IS praised the two as "soldiers of the caliphate" and martyrs, but did not specifically say they were members of the group. The heavily-armed pair, who also wounded 21 in their attack, died in a shootout with police after a manhunt. The rampage was the worst in the United States in three years and revived impassioned debate on gun control in a country where such mass killings have become routine.

The New York Times on Saturday published a front-page editorial - the first since 1920 - calling for an end to "the gun epidemic in America". In contrast, the president of Liberty University, a conservative Christian school, urged students to get permits to carry concealed weapons on campus. "I've always thought if more good people had concealed carry permits, then we could end those Muslims before they walked in," Jerry Falwell Jr. said at the school's convocation to loud cheers. — AFP

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## LEBANESE SOLDIER RECALLS QAEDA KIDNAP ORDEAL

**KOBAYAT, Lebanon:** Lebanese soldier George Al-Khoury cried for days after Al-Qaeda executed a fellow captive during one of the lowest points of his 16-month ordeal as a hostage of the group. Now back home in northern Lebanon, he can barely believe he is free and safe. "My God, how long I've waited to see my son Michael," he says in the living room of his home in Kobayat, with his mother, his wife and their second son Andrew seated around him.

The 30-year-old was among several dozen Lebanese police and soldiers kidnapped by Al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate Al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State group from the border town of Aarsal in Aug 2014. After months of failed negotiations and desperate pleas from their relatives, Al-Nusra last week freed the 16 captives in exchange for the release of prisoners in Lebanese jails and aid.

Khoury joined the army in 2004, to reluctantly fulfil his compulsory service, but stayed on after landing an easy posting at a military hospital. But in 2014, he was unexpectedly transferred to Aarsal, a restive town in east Lebanon where the conflict in neighbouring Syria regularly spills over and tensions run high. It was there, on Aug 2, that his life changed. "We were having a coffee with the commander of the battalion in Aarsal when it

started, with a sniper bullet that killed Sergeant Dirani," Khoury says, his hands shaking as he lights a cigarette. "Suddenly, there was heavy gunfire everywhere."

"One soldier came over to me, his intestines had been pierced by a bullet and he was crying, 'I don't want to die. I want to go to my children,'" Khoury says, as his mother looks on in horror from across the living room. Another soldier who had tried to provide covering fire to help his friends escape was shot in the head in front of Khoury and his colleagues.

### Held in a Cave

Within minutes, Khoury found himself surrounded by dozens of militants. "They were hooded and heavily armed. I remember no fewer than 20 of them surrounding me and one of them promised not to kill me if I surrendered," he said. Another delightedly stole his phone before pushing him outside and onto a truck with other prisoners. "They stepped on us, cursed and insulted us as they transported us, but thankfully they didn't beat us," he says.

He was taken to a mosque, and initially thought his ordeal might be brief. But as the sounds of the battle continued to rage, the gunmen returned and said he would be

moved with the others to a "safe place". That place was a cave, the first of several places Khoury and the other captives would be held during their 16 months as hostages. They spent much of their long days in darkness, blindfolded for hours at a time, except to eat or use the bathroom.

To keep their spirits up, they talked quietly among themselves about their families back home. Khoury had left behind his four-year-old son Michael, and his wife Mary, who was pregnant. She gave birth to their second son, Andrew, while Khoury was held hostage. "I thank God, my life is full of joy now," she says, smiling as she looks at her husband.

### 'I Cried for Days'

Some of their captors would speak to them, and even allowed him to walk around outside. They were given lessons in Islamic law, though Khoury, a Christian, says he was not pressured to convert. But others used psychological tactics like setting off firecrackers to terrify the captives into thinking they would die. And a little over a month into their captivity, Al-Nusra executed the first of the hostages, Mohammed Hammiya. "I cried for two days in a row," Khoury says.



**KOBAYAT, Lebanon:** Lebanese soldier George Al-Khoury, who was kidnapped by jihadist groups in early Aug 2014, stands with his wife and one of their two sons at their house in this village on Dec 2, 2015. — AFP

A second soldier, Ali Al-Bazzal, a Shiite like Hammiya, was separated from the group and fed almost nothing. He too would eventually be killed. The remaining men were transferred to another cave, and

then a house, and had their hopes of release raised and dashed several times. Khoury dreamed often about going home, and said the separation from his children was the worst hardship. — AFP



**GAMMARTH, Tunisia:** Awad Mohammed Abdul-Sadiq (second left), the first deputy head of the Tripoli-based General National Congress (GNC), and Ibrahim Fethi Amish (center), from the internationally recognized House of Representatives, pose for a picture with representatives ahead of a ceremony of signing documents on reaching an agreement on ending the political deadlock in Libya in this Tunisian town on the outskirts of Tunis yesterday. — AFP

## AGREEMENT REACHED ON LIBYA POLITICAL SOLUTION

### OFFICIALS HAIL HISTORIC BREAKTHROUGH

**GAMMARTH, Tunisia:** Warring Libyan factions meeting in Tunisia said yesterday they had reached an agreement to be approved by rival parliaments on ending the political deadlock that has plagued the country since Muammar Gaddafi's overthrow. "This is a historic moment the Libyans were waiting for, the Arabs were waiting for and the world was waiting for," said Awad Mohammed Abdul-Sadiq, the first deputy head of the Tripoli-based General National Congress (GNC).

GNC officials had been holding talks in the suburbs of Tunis for several days with delegates from the internationally recognized House of Representatives. Abdul-Sadiq called on Libyans to support what he called "a historic opportunity." "If this solution receives real Libyan support - from the people and institutions - we will surely arrive in no more than two weeks or a month to a solution to solve the political crisis," he told a press conference.

Amna Emtair from the GNC delegation told

AFP the agreement would set up a new representative body that would choose a committee to nominate a prime minister within 15 days, while another committee would conduct a review of Libya's constitution. "It is a major breakthrough," Emtair said.

Libya descended into chaos after the Oct 2011 ouster and killing of longtime dictator Gaddafi, with two governments vying for power and armed groups battling for control of its vast energy resources. A militia alliance including Islamists overran Tripoli in Aug 2014, establishing a rival government and a parliament that forced the internationally recognized administration to flee to the country's remote east.

Veteran German diplomat Martin Kobler took over the job of UN special envoy for Libya on Nov 17, replacing Spaniard Bernardino Leon. After almost a year of arduous negotiations, Leon in early October proposed a power-sharing deal under which Libya would be governed by a nine-member presidential council made up

of a prime minister, five deputy premiers and three senior ministers. But lawmakers from Libya's internationally recognized parliament and its Tripoli-based rival balked at the deal and the names put forward by Leon.

In news conferences in Tobruk and Tripoli in his first week, Kobler urged politicians on both sides to rally around the deal proposed by his predecessor to set up a national unity government. The latest announcement comes as experts and sources in Libya said that the Islamic State jihadist group has strengthened its grip in its Libyan stronghold Sirte. IS first appeared in Libya in 2014 when a group of Libyan IS fighters returned from Syria and reorganized in the port city of Derna, declaring eastern Libya to be a province of the caliphate. Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni said Wednesday that Rome would host an international conference on Libya on Dec 13, aimed at stopping the country from falling apart and containing IS. — AFP

## SYRIA'S DIVIDED OPPN SEEKS TO UNIFY STANCE

**DUBAI:** Syrian opposition groups gather in Saudi Arabia tomorrow to unify their stance ahead of potential talks with the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad whose fate remains a point of contention. It will be the first time representatives of the political opposition and military factions fighting the regime have come together since the conflict began in 2011. Saudi Arabia is hoping to unite the opposition ahead of talks between parties to the conflict which world powers hope to hold before Jan 1.

Some hundred representatives are likely to attend the meeting on Wednesday, including Saudi-backed Jaish al-Islam (The Army of Islam), an amalgam of factions that include hardline Islamists, which is not listed as a terrorist group. The invitees do not include those considered to be "terrorist", such as the Islamic State group and Al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate Al-Nusra Front.

Kurdish factions are also not invited. "The mission is difficult and risky," said Samir Nashar, a member of the Istanbul-based National Coalition, the main Syrian opposition grouping. He said the aim was to "agree on a common and clear position concerning the future of Syria, the transition and the stance on (the fate of) Bashar Al-Assad." Last month, top diplomats from 17 countries - including key international backers and opponents of Assad - met in Vienna in search of a political solution to Syria's war, which has seen 250,000 people killed since March 2011.

### 'Core Differences' Over Assad

Those nations included the United States and Saudi Arabia which back the opposition, and Russia and Iran, Assad's main supporters. They agreed on a fixed calendar for Syria that would see a transition government set up in six months and elections within 18 months. Speaking of "core differences" over Assad's fate, Nashar said he feared that "some groups close to states supporting the regime, could demand that Assad stays during the transition period." "This risks causing the failure of the meeting," he said.

Groups supported by the United States, Saudi Arabia and Qatar demand Assad's rapid departure, a condition that Iran and Russia continue to oppose. "The opposition still demands the departure of Assad at the beginning of the transition period," insisted Ahmed Ramadan, another

National Coalition member. "We cannot negotiate before agreeing in principle and having a date for the departure of Assad," he said. Nashar said that although a ceasefire is a must, that "could not mean that we accept that Bashar Al-Assad could stay during the transition (only) because he will stop killing".

Meanwhile, the Syria-based opposition which is tolerated by the regime argues that Assad's fate should be decided by the Syrian people. "There is an international agreement that this issue should be decided by the Syrians," said Hassan Abdel Azim, who heads the National Coordination Committee for Democratic Change.

### Push for a Ceasefire

The recent deadly attacks by IS, mainly those in Paris last month, appear to have softened the positions of Western countries on Assad, especially France. "A united Syria implies a political transition. That does not mean that Bashar al-Assad must leave even before the transition, but there must be assurances for the future," French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said in an interview published on Saturday. His American counterpart John Kerry also urged Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to convince Syrian rebel groups to negotiate a ceasefire with Damascus, in an effort to isolate jihadists.

A US-led coalition, including several Gulf and other Arab countries, in Sept 2014 launched an air campaign against IS. Moscow mounted its own campaign in September this year, but the National Coalition accuses Russia of bombing rebels battling Assad's regime. Haytham Manna, co-founder of the opposition coalition Cairo Conference, said 20 members of his group would join next week's talks.

Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, hopes to come out of the meeting with a "unified Syrian opposition, and to stop the Russians and others from claiming there is no Syrian opposition that is unified", according to Saudi columnist Jamal Khashoggi. This will ease the process of getting rid of Assad, he said. Regional rival Iran, however, has warned that the Saudi conference would breach declarations made by both sides in Vienna seeking a list of mutually approved opposition groups. — AFP

## AZERBAIJAN MOURNS 'DEATHS' AFTER FIRE

**BAKU:** Azerbaijan was yesterday searching for 29 missing oil workers after a storm caused their offshore oil rig to catch fire, as the president ordered a day of mourning. A fire broke out on the rig in the Caspian following a storm on Friday "leading to many deaths," said a statement on the official website of President Aliyev. "I join the relatives in their grief and designate December 6 as a day of mourning in Azerbaijan," it quoted him as saying. Flags were ordered to fly at half mast and entertainment programs cancelled, his office said.

Aliyev's statement was the closest to an official confirmation that 30 workers have likely perished at sea when one lifeboat where the crew was taking refuge fell into the water. Rescue workers had lifted a total of 33 people from the rig, the open water, and from a lifeboat that was suspended 10 m above the stormy waters. But a second lifeboat fell into the water and has not been recovered.

The workers were wearing life vests, according to the company, and some of them were recovered from the sea at a considerable distance from the rig. So far, the body of one worker has been found. SOCAR state energy firm listed the 62 names of its employees working on the rig, who were either rescued or missing. "We are looking for 29 people. Whether they are alive or dead we

don't know. Before we find them we cannot pronounce them dead," company vice-president Khosrbakht Yusifzade told a press briefing yesterday.

Eleven helicopters were still searching for the lifeboat but it may have already drifted out of Azerbaijan's waters. It was last seen from the air 50 km from the rig, SOCAR said, adding that Azerbaijan's government has asked other Caspian nations Kazakhstan, Iran, Russia, and Turkmenistan to aid in recovering the bodies if necessary.

### Safety Inquiry Opened

The storm had on Friday damaged a gas line on platform number 10 in the deepwater Guneshli section of the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli offshore oil field, causing a fire, SOCAR said. The fire was still burning on Sunday, but SOCAR said it would be extinguished by the evening. Prosecutors on Saturday opened an probe into possible "breaches of fire safety regulations". The Guneshli deposits were discovered in 1981 in the south Caspian Sea, some 90 km east of the Azeri capital Baku. Platform number 10 is operated solely by SOCAR.

A mainly Muslim country of nine million wedged between Russia and Iran, Azerbaijan is a key partner in projects to deliver Caspian Sea energy reserves to the West through pipelines to Turkey, bypassing Russia. — AFP

## TURKEY 'ASTONISHED' BY IRAN CLAIMS OF IS SUPPORT

**ANKARA:** Turkey yesterday said it was "astonished" by Iranian accusations that Ankara is supporting Islamic State and involved in oil dealing with the jihadists in Iraq and Syria. Turkish foreign ministry spokesman Tanju Bilgic said in a statement there was nothing in Tehran's accusations to take "seriously". Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Thursday he had warned his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani over some Iranian media reports that he and his family were involved in oil trade with IS jihadists.

Erdogan said that he spoke with Rouhani on the phone and told him: "You will pay a high price if it continues like that." He added that the Iranians later removed the news from their website. Turkish foreign ministry spokesman Bilgic confirmed the telephone conversation between the two presidents and said any attempts to distort its content were "not only immoral but also equal to hiding the truth from neighboring Iranian people." In response to Erdogan, Iranian foreign ministry on Friday called for "mutual politeness and respect in relations," according to the Iranian media. "The continuation of policies and positions that, wanted or unwanted, have led to the support of terrorism in Syria and Iraq, only escalate the current crisis in the region and increase problems for countries that continue such policies," Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Hossein Jaber-Ansari said according to IRNA.

Russia and Iran are major backers of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's regime. Turkey is supporting rebels who have been fighting Assad and has joined a US-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group in Syria earlier this year. Bilgic said Turkey pur-



**DIYARBAKIR, Turkey:** Turkish riot police use tear gas yesterday to disperse protestors from Diyarbakir's historical Sur district which has been placed under a curfew. — AFP

sued "principled policies" for a peaceful solution to problems in its region. He said Ankara was not taking "seriously the terrorism accusations made by the states which led to the escalation of the crisis in cooperation with the Damascus regime," referring to Iran and Russia.

Turkey is currently at loggerheads with Russia after downing one of Moscow's warplanes on Nov 24. Russia has accused Erdogan and his family of involvement in oil trade - charges blasted as "slander" and "immoral" by the Turkish strongman. Iranian Foreign

Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said last month that Turkey's downing of the Russian fighter jet "sends the wrong message to the terrorists" in Syria. Iran yesterday said it was its "duty" to mediate between Russia and Turkey. "Iran has a duty to reduce tensions between Russia and Turkey and it's not good to have another tension added to the existing ones in the region," Ali Akbar Velayati, an advisor to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was quoted as saying by the official Irna news agency. — Agencies



## CHURCH LAUNCHES JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY AMID TIGHT SECURITY

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis will this week launch a Roman Catholic Jubilee dedicated to the theme of mercy against a backdrop of unprecedented security in and around the Vatican. In the latest incarnation of a 700-year-old Catholic tradition, tomorrow will mark the beginning of a holy period of just under a year in which believers are encouraged to renew their relationship with God and seek forgiveness for their sins.

The jubilee runs until November 20, 2016. As has been the case for seven centuries, pilgrims visiting Rome will be able to mark the occasion by entering St Peter's and other famous churches through special Holy Doors that are kept bricked up between Jubilees. But the pilgrimage is no longer a required rite. In a Francis innovation, believers will have access to Holy Doors around the world-including in the Central African Republic capital, where the pope himself opened a door last month. Francis also set a new tone for this Jubilee with his surprise announcement in September that he would be granting every priest the discretion to absolve women who have had abortions.

### Political move

It was a remarkable move for the leader of a Church, which views the termination of pregnancies as a heinous sin which, in normal times, is punishable by excommunication. Pro-choice

extraordinary Jubilee in March on the second anniversary of his election. At the time, many interpreted Francis' move as highly political, coming as it did just four months after his plans for reform of attitudes to divorce and homosexuality had run into fierce opposition from traditionalist bishops at a synod on the family.

### High alert

They have been held variously at intervals of 25, 33 (Christ's age when he was crucified) and 50 years with occasional extraordinary ones slotted in between. The last Jubilee was in 2000 and was called by John Paul II to mark the millennium. By attracting hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to Rome in search of indulgences they were often willing to pay for, Jubilee years became huge money-spinners for the early modern Church, contributing to the theological turmoil which led to the establishment of rival protestant Churches in much of northern Europe.

Today, they provide a boon for Rome's hotel-keepers and taxi drivers with even some modest boarding houses run by religious orders reported to have jacked up their room rates to cash in on the increased demand for bed space. For the cash-strapped city authorities, the Jubilee represents a major headache with additional convoys of pilgrim coaches adding to the strain on creaking infrastructure and overcrowded tourist areas



PARIS: (Left) Former French President and current French right-wing opposition "Les Republicains" party leader Nicolas Sarkozy (center) and former first lady Carla Bruni-Sarkozy arrive at a polling station yesterday before voting as part of the first round of the regional elections. (Right) A French flag is seen next to a stuffed animal, flowers and a child's drawing placed at the foot of the central monument on the Place de la Republique in Paris in memory of the victims of the November 13 attacks yesterday. — AP



## FRANCE VOTES AMID TENSIONS AROUND ATTACKS, MIGRATION

### FRENCH FAR-RIGHT SET FOR BIG GAINS

PARIS: France's far-right National Front was tipped for historic gains as regional polls were held yesterday under a state of emergency just three weeks after Islamic extremists killed 130 people in Paris. Around 45 million people are eligible to vote in an election being held under tight security following the country's worst-ever terror attacks, which have thrust the FN's anti-immigration and often Islamophobic message to the fore.

The last opinion poll on Friday by Ipsos-Sopra said the FN would take the largest slice of the vote — 29.5 percent—followed by a mix of right-wing and centrist parties on 28.5 percent and the ruling Socialists on 23 percent. FN leader Marine Le Pen was on course to win control of the economically depressed northern region of Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie, once a bastion of the left.

Her 25-year-old niece Marion Marechal-Le Pen seemed to be heading for an equally strong score in the vast southeastern Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur region that includes beaches thronged by sun-seekers in the summer. "I expect to gain enough momentum in this first round to be optimistic about the second round" next Sunday, Marine Le Pen said as she cast her vote. First projections were expected at 1900 GMT. France's regions have recently been consolidated and given more power over areas such as schools, transport and support for local businesses.

### Hollande's Socialists languish

Casting his ballot in Evry south of Paris, Prime Minister Manuel Valls said: "I hope many French people will vote, especially after the terrorist attacks. We shall overcome, and our weapon is our vote." President Francois Hollande, who cast his vote in Tulle in central France, has seen his personal ratings surge as a result of his hardline approach since the November 13 Paris attacks. But his Socialist Party is languishing behind the FN and the centre-right Republicans led by former president Nicolas Sarkozy.

The FN is also seen as in with a chance in the eastern Alsace-Champagne-Ardenne-Lorraine region that borders Belgium and Germany, according to polls by Ipsos and Odoxa. If traditional parties refuse to join forces against them, analysts predict the FN could take all three regions on December 13, when voters return to the polls to pick from the top two parties of the first round.

Victory would not only put the party at the head of a regional government for the first time, but would also give Le Pen a springboard for her presidential bid in 2017. In her campaign, she has focused repeatedly on the migrant camp in Calais known as "The Jungle" where thousands of people are camped trying to reach Britain and northern Europe. With the FN also locked in a close race for

Burgundy and Franche-Comte in the east, politicians across the spectrum appealed to their supporters to head off a historic victory by the party.

### 'We told you so'

Ahead of the vote, Valls urged party activists to "appeal to patriotism" to ensure a massive turnout, with Le Pen accusing him of waging "total war" against her. The Republicans' deputy leader Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet said it was time to "prove the polls wrong": "Our duty is not to be paralyzed by the polls and wait for the inevitable to happen, but to fight and fight," she said.

The FN-whose leaders have repeatedly linked immigration with terrorism has been climbing in the polls since the carnage in Paris. When it emerged that at least two of the attackers had entered Europe posing as migrants, the FN went to town with a message of "we told you so." But any election triumph will depend on whether the other parties are able to forge alliances against it. Socialist leaders were set to begin talks after the first results came in yesterday to decide whether to withdraw from some second-round battles, while the Republicans' strategy meeting is set for today. One Socialist expected to win is Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, a popular choice in the northwestern Brittany region. — AFP



ROME: Pope Francis waves to the crowd during the Sunday Angelus prayer from a window of the apostolic palace overlooking St Peter's square yesterday. — AFP

groups are skeptical about whether many women-or doctors who carry out abortions for that matter-will avail themselves of the pope's offer to confess. Instead, many Vatican watchers saw the move as another example of Francis signaling his desire to change the Church's approach from condemnation of wrongdoing to understanding of the difficulties posed by 21st century believers. "The greater the sin, the greater the love the Church must express," the Argentinian pontiff said when he announced the

raising safety concerns. Italian security forces have been put on high alert due to fears of jihadist attacks like the Paris carnage of November 13. A no-fly zone applying to drones as well as regular aircraft has been declared above the capital and provisions made to shoot down anything that breaches it. Despite the extraordinary and unprecedented measures, officials stress that they have no knowledge of a specific or credible plot to attack Rome or the Vatican. — AFP



GEVGELIJA: People pull a woman in a wheelchair as they prepare to board a train with other migrants and refugees after crossing the Greek-Macedonian border, near Gevgelija yesterday. Macedonia has restricted passage to northern Europe to only Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans who are considered war refugees. All other nationalities are deemed economic migrants and told to turn back. Over 1,500 people are stuck on the border, mostly Indian, Moroccan, Bangladeshi and Pakistani. — AFP

## C AFRICA SLAMS REBEL LEADER

BANGUI: The Central African Republic's interim government yesterday branded senior rebel figure Nourredine Adam "public enemy No. 1" after he threatened to block elections later this month in areas under his control. His Patriotic Front for the Renaissance of Central Africa (FPRC), a splinter faction of the former Seleka rebel group that staged a coup in 2013, is staging an armed revolt in the north and east of the country. In

a statement to AFP, the government said Adam "opposes holding the referendum and the presidential and legislative elections in areas placed illegally under his control, areas which he believes will form part of his so-called Logone Republic."

"This decision constitutes an act of war and should be treated as such," the communique said. Central Africa's army has not been operational since the start

of the crisis. In wanting to create the "illusory partition of the Central African Republic", Adam has become "public enemy No. 1 of unity, peace and national reconciliation," it said. "How is it possible that Nourredine Adam, who has been sanctioned by the United Nations, is still able to move around freely?" the government asked. Nearly 11,000 UN peacekeepers are deployed in Central Africa alongside 900 French soldiers. In

May 2014, the UN Security Council ordered sanctions against three CAR leaders, including Adam, the Seleka militia's number two, for their part in driving factional bloodshed between Muslims and Christians.

The country's former president Francois Bozize was overthrown in a 2013 rebellion by rebels from the mainly-Muslim Seleka force, triggering the country's worst crisis since it won independence in 1960. Since the end of September, Adam has been based in the northern Kaga Bando region along with 500 to 700 armed followers. "A return to constitutional order will only happen through the ballot box," the government said yesterday, urging Central Africans "not to give in to fear". A first round of legislative and presidential elections will take place on December 27, with the vote shaping up to be a major test of the country's progress in its political transition following the violence, which was triggered by a 2013 coup. Ahead of the vote, there will be a referendum on a proposed new constitution on December 13 in what is widely seen as a dress rehearsal for the elections. — AFP

## MAN OVERPOWERED ON LUFTHANSA FLIGHT

BERLIN: Lufthansa crew and passengers overpowered a man who interfered with a cabin door on a Frankfurt-Belgrade flight yesterday, the German carrier said, insisting the safety of the plane had not been threatened. "A passenger got up and tried to do something at the door, but was stopped by crew members and other passengers," said airline spokesman Andreas Bartels. "The passenger was then restrained for the remainder of the flight in his seat and handed over to the authorities in Belgrade," he said. "It was a normal

door, which of course cannot be opened in-flight... it was not the cockpit door," he said. "The safety of the flight was not jeopardized and the flight landed safely in Belgrade."

Bartels declined to provide information on the identity of the passenger or his nationality, or what he said during the incident. Serbian state-run television reported that police had arrested a Jordanian man after he tried to force his way into the cockpit of the Lufthansa flight. The man had suddenly got up during the flight, banged on the cockpit

door and demanded to be allowed to enter, threatening to open one of the plane's doors while it was flying over Austria, Serbia's RTS television reported.

The man, whom Serb press said was called Laken and had a US passport, had cried out that he wished to join Almighty Allah along with all the passengers, RTS said. He was overpowered by flight crew and members of a Serb handball team who subdued him until the flight landed in Belgrade where he was arrested, the report said. — AFP

## DRESDEN FEARS ANTI-FOREIGNER PROTESTS HURTING TOURISM

DRESDEN: The German city of Dresden, known for its Baroque architecture and romantic Christmas market, worries about the damage to its image caused by the xenophobic protests of the PEGIDA movement. The historic city's tourism industry is going "through its deepest crisis since national reunification" in 1990, said Johannes Lohmeyer, president of the tourism federation in the city dubbed the "Florence on the Elbe" river. For more than a year, the city has made headlines as the birthplace and centre of the far-right populist movement "Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident", whose flag-waving members rally every Monday against refugees.

To many Germans, Dresden-the largest city in the former communist East, a region which still lags the west in prosperity and jobs-has become a symbol for the ugly backlash against migrants, in stark contrast to the welcome seen in many other places. Lohmeyer was quick to add that, despite a fall in bookings, "certainly, the situation is not catastrophic" for the tourism sector, which is worth about 1 billion euros (\$1 billion) and generates around 20,000 jobs in the Dresden area.

"The tourists are still there, and conventions are being held-but the decline in reservations worries us," said the Egyptian-German, who has beefed up the marketing team at his business hotel with two new hires.

### PEGIDA effect

At first glance, all seems normal as tourists snap pictures outside the Frauenkirche, a baroque church in the capital of Saxony state-a city that was devastated by Allied bombing in 1945 but was renovated at great expense after reunification. Among the visitors were Brit and Frank Rofalski, aged in their 40s and from the Dusseldorf area, who were in Dresden to celebrate their silver wedding anniversary on a recent Monday-hours before

another PEGIDA demonstration.

"For us Dresden is a romantic destination, we came without hesitation," said Birgit, a hairdresser, while her husband added: "We simply asked our hotel to tell us which streets to avoid." Many others, however, have stayed away. In the year's first nine months, overnight stays in Dresden fell by 2.3 percent compared to the same period in 2014, while arrivals in other major cities rose. The number of German tourists, who account for over three-quarters of the total, fell by 4.2 percent.

Lohmeyer said he blamed the PEGIDA effect and, above all, "the obsession of the German media with this movement", which he argued had unfairly tarnished the reputation of the city. The beleaguered industry is now, however, getting a boost from its famous Christmas Market, which opened on the last November weekend with great fanfare for the 581st time. "Hotels are fully booked for weekends in December," said Bettina Bunge, president of Dresden Marketing, which has launched a campaign to draw people to "a magical winter in Dresden".

### 'Restore image'

But tourism is not the only sector with reason to worry-also nervous are the city's universities and research institutes. Professor Hans Mueller-Steinhagen, president of the Technical University of Dresden (TUD), one of Germany's 11 "universities of excellence", said he was concerned about the city's reputation and feared it might make the institutes less attractive for foreign students.

"Before, the image of Dresden was clearly an asset internationally, but now our colleagues are concerned for us as far away as Korea," he said. Although his university has 18 percent foreign students in its bachelor and masters programs, up from 16 percent last year, "a growing number of candidates now hesitate" before coming, he said. — AFP



DRESDEN: A man dressed as Santa Claus rests yesterday. — AFP

## 'WE FEEL ASHAMED': PAKISTANI RELATIVES OF CALIFORNIA SHOOTER

**KAROR LAL ESAM:** Estranged relatives of a Pakistani woman involved in a mass shooting in California spoke yesterday of their shame at her crimes, as former classmates and teachers painted a picture of a quiet, religiously conservative student. Tashfeen Malik, 29, and her husband Syed Farook, 28, gunned down 14 people at a social services centre in San Bernardino, an act praised by the Islamic State group who hailed the couple as "soldiers" of its self-proclaimed caliphate.

According to her uncle Malik Ahmed Ali Aulakh, who is a former provincial minister, Tashfeen was born in the village of Karor Lal Esan in the central province of Punjab but moved to Saudi Arabia around 1989. Tashfeen's father Gulzar Malik an engineer, had grown distant from his family and "he never came back even to attend the marriages of close relatives", added Aulakh.

"We are ashamed and shocked about this act done by our niece-why did she

do something so gruesome? We can't believe it," he told AFP. Malik Omar Ali Aulakh, another of her uncles, added: "We have not kept in touch with Gulzar's family and he avoided contacting us." The southern region of Punjab from which Tashfeen hailed has long been associated with Sufism, a mystical form of Islam whose adherents worship with song and dance, attend shrines and devote themselves to historic saints-practices viewed as heretical by more orthodox Muslims.

Indeed, according to Mohammad Jamil, a neighbor of Tashfeen's father, one of Tashfeen's uncles himself was a Sufi devotional singer. "We don't want Muslims to do such things. Such people should be punished, must be punished," said Jamil, adding: "She has dishonored Pakistan."

It is still not clear where Tashfeen became radicalized, but by the time she returned to Pakistan in 2007 to pursue a

degree in pharmacology at the Bahauddin Zakariya University, she was devoutly religious and wore a veil, according to former instructors. "She was not outspoken or ultra-modern but she was religious minded, polite and submissive," said Dr Khalid Hussain Janbaz, chair of the pharmacy department.

"I don't think she could have done what they have accused her of, she was a very good student who never created problems for staff or class fellows," added Dr Hussain Shah, an associate professor in the department. Pakistan's government yesterday issued a statement condemning the attack, even as its interior minister said Islamabad could not be held responsible. "A country or a national or a religion cannot be held responsible for a crime committed by an individual and I appreciate a wise approach adopted by the US administration on the issue," minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan told reporters in Islamabad. — AFP



**KAROR LAL ESAM:** Hifza Batool, a relative of Tashfeen Malik is pictured at her home in the town of Karor Lal Esam, about 450 kilometers (280 miles) southwest of Islamabad, Pakistan. — AP



**CARACAS:** National Guard soldiers in riot gear stand by a polling station yesterday during the Venezuela's legislative election. — AFP

## US KEENLY, BUT DISCREETLY WATCHES VENEZUELA POLLS

### CHALLENGE FOR SOCIALISTS AS VENEZUELAN ELECT LEGISLATURE

**WASHINGTON:** The outcome of Venezuela's legislative elections yesterday, when the political left is in real danger of losing its majority for the first time since 1999, could greatly impact ties with the United States. How will depend on the extent of the opposition's gains and how the socialist government of President Nicolas Maduro reacts to it, observers say, amid fears that violence and unrest could break out.

Surveys show that opposition candidates are likely to make substantial inroads in Venezuela's single-chamber National Assembly, where all 167 seats are in play. US officials are keeping a discreet eye on developments, but are wary of giving Maduro an excuse to rally support by railing against US "imperialism" even if the US is Venezuela's main export market.

In many ways, yesterday's vote is a referendum on Maduro's the handpicked successor to late president Hugo Chavez and his economic policies. Maduro has just a 22 percent approval rating, according to a Datanalysis survey, and Venezuela is enduring a 200 percent annual inflation rate (only 85 percent, according to the government), a contracting economy and a shortage of basics that range from toilet paper to canned goods. Venezuela may have the world's largest proven oil reserves, but its oil hit a seven-year low of \$34.05 a barrel this week. The country relies on oil exports for 96 percent of its hard currency.

#### Margin of victory key

"The opposition's margin of victory will define what will happen after the elections," both internally and regarding the United States, said Peter Schechter at the Atlantic Council think tank, based in Washington. Given the sweeping powers granted to the executive, Maduro's grip on power would not be directly threatened even with a loss of the Assembly, experts say and could even be a blessing in disguise for him. "Losing control of the National Assembly could provide Maduro's government and Chavismo a partner in governing at a time when difficult choices will need to be made," said John Walsh with the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). A darker scenario would occur if the opposition makes especially strong gains and the government hunkers down, radicalizes, and claims that the gains are due to US support.

If the Venezuelan government believes "that a real crisis they can generate with the US would help them through a volatile period," then relations with Washington "will deteriorate quite rapidly," said Eric Farnsworth with the Council of the Americas, a pro-free trade and democracy business group. Equally important is any power shift within the leftist government following an especially strong opposition victory. For Schechter, "a redistribution of power" within Maduro's socialist party "could be stormy" if their leaders panic.

#### Close observer

Washington and Caracas have had frosty ties ever since Maduro's late and more popular predecessor Chavez came to power in 1999. The two countries have not exchanged ambassadors since 2010. Despite years of sometimes angry rhetoric Venezuela is an important source of oil for the US market, and the United States is the country's most important oil customer. Over the past year both sides have quietly sought to defuse tension. President Barack Obama briefly met Maduro at the Summit of the Americas in April, and later sent diplomat Thomas Shannon to Caracas to open a direct communications channel that both sides appear willing to keep open.

It would be a "mistake" for Washington to show favorites in the vote, Schechter said. US officials "will say that democracy includes different points of view, and that an assembly dominated by the opposition formalizes the expression of multiple opinions." "To say more than this would be a mistake," Schechter said. For Farnsworth, Washington "will also be forced to say something if the elections are clearly stolen or clearly there are cases of fraud." The US State Department's comments on Friday were fairly neutral. "All Venezuelans deserve to have full confidence in the important elections on December 6 and their outcome," said Elizabeth Trudeau, head of the State Department Office of Press Relations. — AFP

## WOMAN IN DEADLY CALIFORNIA RAMPAGE FERVENTLY DEVOUT

**SAN BERNARDINO:** In the final few years of Tashfeen Malik's life, the people around the young woman saw her dress ever more conservatively and urge people ever more ardently to live a devout life. For an aunt in Malik's old hometown in Pakistan, Malik's growing religious focus was one of the last things she heard about her 29-year-old niece - before last week, when she learned that her niece and her niece's husband had donned masks, hoisted assault rifles and killed 14 people in a rampage in Southern California.

"I recently heard it from relatives that she has become a religious person, and she often tells people to live according to the teachings of Islam," recalled aunt Hifza Batool. Batool spoke in the town of Karor Lal Esan, the home of Malik's family, 280 miles (450 kilometers) southwest of the Pakistani capital of Islamabad.

Malik's path from Pakistan to the bloody events of last week - when she and her husband slaughtered people gathered for a training session and holiday luncheon - remains a mystery. FBI officials, family lawyers and others said they know little about the housewife and mother, apart from what came to light on Friday: that Malik had pledged allegiance on Facebook to the Islamic State group as she and her American-born husband, Syed Farook, 28, launched the massacre. The husband and wife were killed in a furious shootout with police hours after they opened fire on a gathering of Farook's colleagues from the San Bernardino County public health department, where he worked as a restaurant inspector.

#### In contact with extremists

The FBI said it is investigating the rampage as a terrorist attack. President Barack Obama planned to deliver a prime-time address to the nation yesterday night on the attack and the government's efforts to keep the country safe. Early Saturday, authorities with guns drawn raided a home next door to the house where Farook's family used to live in Riverside, California, breaking windows and using a cutting torch to get into the garage, neighbors said.

The FBI would not say what it was looking for, but a neighbor said an old friend of Farook's lives there. More than three years ago, that person

bought the two assault rifles used in the shootings, but authorities haven't been able to talk to him because he checked himself into a mental hospital after the attack, said a law enforcement official who was not allowed to discuss the investigation and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The FBI has said the man is not a suspect in the shootings, though they want to question him. US officials said Farook had been in contact with extremists via social media. One official said those contacts were not recent and did not involve any significant players on the FBI's radar. Farook was born in Chicago to Pakistani parents and raised in Southern California. Malik arrived in the US in 2014 on a Pakistani passport and a fiancée visa but had spent time in Saudi Arabia.

#### Radicalized before marriage

Saudi Interior Ministry spokesman Maj Gen Mansour Al-Turki told the AP that authorities there have received no indication Malik was radicalized in Saudi Arabia. Al-Turki said Saudi records show she was not a resident of Saudi Arabia and had been to the kingdom only twice. On both trips, she came to visit her family, once in 2008 for several weeks and the second time in 2013 for four months.

The Saudi Interior Ministry confirmed Sunday that Malik's father - Gulzar Ahmed Malik - has been a resident in the kingdom since the early 1980s. However, Saudi laws do not permit authorities to release further details about his whereabouts or his profession since he is not a suspect. Al-Turki said millions of foreigners work and live in Saudi Arabia, with many enrolling their children in schools in the kingdom. He said he has not heard of any cases of them being radicalized and carrying out terrorist attacks.

Malik started studying pharmacy at Bahauddin Zakariya University in the Pakistani city of Multan in 2012. A maid who worked in the Multan home where Malik lived said Malik initially wore a scarf that covered her head but not her face. A year before she got married, she began wearing a scarf that covered all but her nose and eyes, the maid said. The maid spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of jeopardizing her employment with the family. — AP

## CALIFORNIA KILLINGS SHOW NEED TO SHARE INTELLIGENCE: CLINTON

**SIoux CITY:** Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton said Friday the mass killing in California heightened the need for intelligence sharing, military strikes in places where extreme elements have taken hold and a prohibition of gun purchases by those on terror watch lists. The former secretary of state said in Iowa that the massacre that left 14 dead and many more injured in San Bernardino, California, showed the US must step up its vigilance against global threats. She said the fight must also occur online, given the sophisticated use of the Internet by extremist groups. "We're going to have to figure out how we deprive them of the oxygen of social media. They run multiple Twitter accounts and other kinds of accounts," Clinton told reporters after a town hall event. "I don't know that we would let that continue if we were dealing with a criminal network. Why should we let it continue if we're dealing with a terrorist network?"

Clinton's remarks came as the FBI announced it was officially investigating the shooting as an act of terrorism and indications one of the shooters made an online posting pledging allegiance to the Islamic State group and its leader. Clinton said the evidence increasingly adds "support for the view this was a terrorist act." She said the nation needs to be vigilant and cooperative, "collecting and analyzing information," and urged the government to "redouble our efforts

to dismantle the global structure of terrorism."

#### More restrictions

Throughout the day, Clinton harped on a vote in Washington against a measure to bar gun purchases by people whose name appear on no-fly lists for flights to and around the United States. Republicans, in turn, said Clinton's nod to gun control was misplaced. "The fact Hillary Clinton and President Obama continue to exploit this situation to push for more restrictions on Americans' Second Amendment rights is as deplorable as it is dangerous," Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus said in a statement. Clinton scoffed at the criticism.

"I know we can save lives and we shouldn't be conflating the two," she said, referring to her efforts to protect people from terrorism and to the GOP criticism about gun control. "We can go after terrorists and we need to do more to save the lives of Americans every single day from homicide, suicide and these terrible accidents." Clinton's two stops in Iowa, the home of the nation's leadoff presidential caucuses, were also about plugging a new plan to rebuild the nation's aging transportation system. It would aim to spend \$275 billion to fix crumbling bridges, highways and airports, and would seek to create a national infrastructure bank that has been blocked by Republicans during President Barack Obama's two terms. — AP

## CALIFORNIA'S STRICT GUN LAWS FAIL TO STOP MASS SHOOTING

**SACRAMENTO:** The deadly shooting in San Bernardino happened in a state with some of the toughest gun laws in the United States: California bars assault weapons, blocks the sale of large-capacity magazines and requires universal background checks for all gun purchases. Authorities say they believe suspected gunman Syed Rizwan Farook and wife Tashfeen Malik had legally obtained two handguns and that two rifles were also legally purchased in California. Federal officials say the attackers had large-capacity magazines that violate California law in their SUV.

Since the attack Wednesday at a social service center in Southern California, the state's strict laws and the apparent legal purchase of the weapons have set off a debate over the effectiveness of gun measures and whether getting tougher would help prevent more violence. "Strong gun laws do prevent gun deaths. Not every law can prevent every gun death," said Allison Anderman, a staff attorney with the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence in San Francisco. "They work most of the time." The gun-control advocacy group rates California's gun laws No. 1 in the nation; the state ranks 42nd in its rate of gun deaths. Louisiana's gun laws were ranked 50th and it is No. 2 in deaths, according to the group's 2014 rankings. Gun laws vary dramatically state-to-state, even city-to-city. The patchwork of regulations means it's often easy for determined gunmen to acquire weapons by skirting laws in their home state, they say. Untraceable weapons can be built from scratch using parts bought online.

#### Loopholes in gun laws

As a result, gun control advocates in the days since the shooting have called for more stringent laws in California and nationwide. At least two state lawmakers say they will propose measures to close what they con-

sider loopholes in the state's gun laws. Crime Prevention Research Center president John Lott, a critic of additional gun laws who is often cited by the gun lobby, argued that the shooting illustrates how expanded background checks supported by President Barack Obama do not stop mass public shootings. He noted that California, Colorado and Oregon - sites of the three most recent shootings - already have such laws in place. "We're being told that even though these laws didn't stop these attacks in these states, somehow they would work in the rest of the country," he said. "I know the claim is, 'we don't expect it to do everything but it will do

some.' Maybe they could point to one case where these laws would make a difference."

The FBI said Farook legally bought the two handguns used in the attack - purchases that would have required a background check. And there is no indication he or Malik had any criminal record or history of mental illness that would have triggered California's unique law allowing authorities to seize weapons from those who aren't allowed to own them. Federal officials are investigating whether the military-style rifles used were part of an illegal straw purchase, possibly from a former neighbor of Farook, and then given to Farook or Malik. — AP



**SAN BERNARDINO:** Laura Muela (far right) waters the flowers at a makeshift memorial honoring the victims of Wednesday's shooting rampage, Saturday, Dec 5, 2015. — AP

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You will be responsible for reviewing US Government Requests for Proposals (RFP) to determine general and specific cost requirements, developing formal cost proposal data that comply with US Government requirements and that comply with corporate Estimating Manual requirements using spreadsheet software such as Microsoft Excel.

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You will be responsible for conducting employee counseling, monitoring the quality of work, assuring attendance accountability, providing customer interface and monitoring responses to requests for information from the various operations centers, as well as, examining and identifying trends in work performance.

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**PR & Media Manager**  
 Tibah Airports Operation  
 KSA

You will be responsible for managing a public relations department along with its staff, directing publicity programs and campaigns, improving public image of company, and clarifying company's point of view on important issues, as well as, developing and implementing strategic PR programs to achieve significant increases in brand awareness.

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**Legal Advisor**  
 Al Suwaidi Holding Co  
 KSA

You will be responsible for conducting legal analysis and research on various legal matters of the client or the organization, providing advice on different legal issues and assisting in drafting legal opinions, memoranda and other briefing documents, as well as, being actively involved in preparing and drafting of different acts and legal submissions.

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**Duty Manager**  
 Hilton  
 KSA

You will be responsible for occupying the hotel lobby and other public areas, particularly at busy times, engaging Guests in conversation and providing general assistance, managing, recording, and resolving all Guest complaints promptly and effectively, as well as, meeting and greeting VIP Guests and major corporate clients upon arrival.

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**Director of Revenue Management**  
 Fairmont - KSA

You will be responsible for ensuring that inventory allocation and pricing parameters are positioned to support the overall revenue goals of the hotel, maximizing net room revenue contribution through a thorough understanding of all booking channels and management of inventory and rate therein.

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**Accounts Manager**  
 Parfait Patisserie  
 UAE

You will be responsible for managing and overseeing the daily operations of the accounting department, processing month and end year process, accounts payable/receivable, cash receipts, general ledger, payroll and utilities, treasury, budgeting, cash forecasting, revenue and expenditure variance analysis and capital assets reconciliations.

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**Customer Case Manager - AF Motors - Al Fullaim Group**  
 UAE

You will be responsible for investigating and resolving customers' concerns and analysing complaint trends and root causes in order to implement measures for improvement on a monthly basis and once a quarter you will review and improve at least one customer facing process in cooperation with the Branch or Workshop Manager

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**Professional Career Ladder Assistant - Horizon Intl. Recruitment - UAE**

You will be responsible for the preparation/ implementation of Professional Career Ladder Programs, as well as, assisting in the preparation and review of the Professional Career Ladder Programs and their related implementation guidelines for employees in Takreer.

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**Director of Delay**  
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You will be required to have a qualified degree in Law, Engineering, or Quantity Surveying, proven track record on large infrastructure and mixed use projects ideally working with project management, consulting, engineers and consultancies, as well as, work experience to include at least years specialising as a Senior Delay Consultant.

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**General Manager - Real Estate**  
 Michael Page International  
 (UAE) Limited - Qatar

You will be responsible for leading and monitoring all Real Estate Development projects and coordinating with all involved parties such as contractors, external engineering, and cost consultants, governmental authorities, etc., as well as, working with the owners to implement strategic priorities for Real Estate projects in terms of recommendation of new real estate projects.

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**Deputy HSE Manager**  
 Adept Personnel  
 Qatar

You will be required to have a Bachelor's Degree in Safety Engineering, or Diploma in Safety Engineering, professional HSE Qualifications (NEBOSH IGC or Diploma), qualified Lead Auditor, as well as, professional HSE Qualifications (IOSH, OSHA) and membership in professional bodies

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**Project Manager/Senior Architect**  
 PD Vival - Qatar

You will be responsible for developing Project Management Plan and all other related activities, keeping the project on track in terms of schedule and budget, identifying, monitoring and responding to risks, as well as, overseeing the performance of all tasks needed for the successful completion of the project.

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**Project Manager**  
 Technoserve  
 Qatar

You will be responsible for managing the complete life cycle of moderately-to-highly complex projects associated with the IP IV & Digital Signage portfolio (including both legacy and newly emerging solutions), program approvals, planning, execution, and closeout to ensure planned results are achieved on time, developing timelines and ensuring progress to plan, as well as, tracking critical project achievements.

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## SENIOR AFGHAN TALEBAN SOURCES DOUBT MANSOUR ALIVE

**KABUL:** Several senior sources within the Taliban yesterday cast doubt on the authenticity of an audio message purporting to prove Mullah Akhtar Mansour was alive, highlighting mistrust within the ranks following the cover-up of Mullah Omar's death. The insurgent group released the 16-minute file late Saturday following reports citing multiple intelligence and militant sources claiming the Taliban chief was killed in a firefight on Tuesday inside Pakistan.

But doubts continued to linger among the group's senior ranks, who are distrustful of their leadership following a two-year cover-up of the death of the Taliban's founder and first leader Mullah Omar. Mawlawi Hanifi, a commander based in southern Helmand province, told AFP: "I listened to the clip and it looks fake. 'I think his voice has been mimicked. Mansour himself fooled us for two years, how can we trust this now?' Another senior Taliban source said that

the group is buying time to select a new leader and bring their organization out of "this sudden shock".

"We need more proof," he concluded. Two other Taliban senior officials expressed similar concerns, with the latter insisting that Mansour succumbed to his injuries on Thursday. In the message, a man purporting to be Mansour said: "I have recorded this message to let everyone know that I am alive."

"I didn't have a fight with anyone, no meeting was held and I have not been to Kuchlak (near Quetta in Pakistan) in years. This is all enemy propaganda," the message added. The man also offered his condolences to the relatives of civilians killed in central Wardak province where a firefight erupted between government forces and the Taliban on Friday.

### Growing mistrust

But two other Taliban officials based in Pakistan's Quetta city told AFP the clip

was genuine and said they had been present at the recording. "This audio was recorded yesterday by our leader Mansour, we were present. The meeting was attended by our high officials, edited, and then sent on to the media," said one of the officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Rahimullah Yousufzai, a Pakistani analyst and long-time observer of the Taliban, said the voice sounded like Mansour's. "I believe it is him," he said, but added that questions would be asked over the delay in releasing the clip. "Why did they wait almost five days to do that? If they'd done it earlier it might have been more effective," he said.

He added that uncertainty within the ranks had been compounded by the mystery surrounding the death of Mullah Omar. Afghan intelligence officials announced his death in July, with the Taliban later confirming their founder had died in 2013, apparently due to ill-

ness. Mansour was declared Taliban leader on July 31, but splits immediately emerged in the group, with some top leaders refusing to pledge their allegiance to the new leader saying the process to select him was rushed and biased.

A breakaway faction of the Taliban led by Mullah Mohamed Rasool was formed last month, in the first formal division in the once-unified group. But Mansour's group has seen a resurgence in recent months, opening new battlefronts across the country with Afghan forces struggling to beat back the expanding insurgency. Speculation about Mansour's death has also threatened to derail a renewed regional push to jump-start peace talks with the Taliban. Mansour is believed to be a proponent of talks with Afghan authorities, a deeply contentious issue that has prompted much rancor within hardline insurgent ranks. — AFP



This handout photograph shows Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour posing for a photograph at an undisclosed location in Afghanistan. — AFP



**BANGALORE:** Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama (second right) is helped by a fellow monk and a security official to climb down the stairs after delivering his key note address 'Universal Responsibility for Harmony' at the Peace for Economy conference yesterday. — AP

## TOP SECURITY HEADS OF INDIA, PAKISTAN MEET

TALKS COVER PEACE, TERRORISM, JAMMU AND KASHMIR

**ISLAMABAD:** The Indian and Pakistani national security advisers held "cordial" talks in Bangkok yesterday on militancy and Kashmir, a joint statement

said, as the two countries seek a thaw in frosty relations. The talks, originally scheduled in August but cancelled by India, came days after the prime min-

isters of both countries met on the sidelines of a conference in Paris. "Pursuant to the meeting of the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in Paris, the

National Security Advisers, accompanied by the Foreign Secretaries (top diplomats), met in Bangkok today," the statement said. "Discussions covered peace and security, terrorism, Jammu and Kashmir, and other issues, including tranquility along LoC," it added. The Line of Control marks the de facto border in the disputed Kashmir region.

The statement said the talks "were held in a candid, cordial and constructive atmosphere" and both sides "agreed to carry forward the constructive engagement." Since gaining independence from Britain in 1947, the two nations have fought three wars-two of them over Kashmir. The territory is divided between the two countries but claimed in full by both. About a dozen militant groups have been fighting in the Indian sector since 1989, seeking either Kashmir's independence or its merger with Pakistan. Hopes were high for a rapprochement between the two countries following the election of Pakistan's centre-right Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2013, whose pro-business platform included campaigning for greater economic cooperation with regional powerhouse India.

But relations between the two nuclear powers worsened significantly in 2014 following the election of Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India, with shelling across their border in Kashmir claiming dozens of lives. There are now signs tensions may be cooling. Apart from the meeting of security officials, the cricket boards of both countries last week agreed in principle to play a short series in Sri Lanka, in what would be their first meeting since 2012. The so-called "cricket diplomacy" still requires final approval by New Delhi. — AFP

## NEW CHINA AIRSTRIPS A POTENTIAL HEADACHE FOR NEIGHBORS, US

**BEIJING:** China's campaign of island building in the South China Sea might soon quadruple the number of airstrips available to the People's Liberation Army in the highly contested and strategically vital region. That could be bad news for other regional contenders, especially the US, the Philippines and Vietnam.

The island construction work that is creating vast amounts of new acreage by piling sand on top of coral reefs is now moving into the construction stage, with buildings, harbors and, most importantly, runways appearing in recent months. China now operates one airstrip at Woody Island in the Paracel island chain, and satellite photos show what appears to be work on two, possibly three, additional airstrips on newly built islands in the Spratly archipelago to the east.

The bases could have a "significant impact on the local balance of power" by helping bolster the forward presence of Chinese coast guard and navy forces, said Euan Graham, director of the International Security Program at the Lowy Institute in Sydney, Australia. As with most South China Sea developments, China has remained opaque about its plans for the island airstrips. At a recent monthly briefing, Defense Ministry spokesman Wu Qian declined to say how many China planned to build or what their purpose would be, repeating only that all military infrastructure was "purely for defensive purposes."

### No threat to stability

Beijing claims almost all of the South China Sea and its islands and has created seven new features in the Spratlys since last year that are permanently above water totaling more than 800 hectares (2,000 acres) in area, according to satellite photos collected by US government agencies and private groups including the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. While China insists its island building works are justified and don't constitute a threat to stability, further militarization of the region seems assured given China's increasingly robust assertions of its territorial claims.

Those perceptions were reinforced with the deployment in October of advanced J-11BH/BHS fighters of the navy air force to Woody Island

that was revealed online in China in October. China's military has declined to comment on the reports. The island's 2.4-kilometer (1.49-mile) long runway will soon be eclipsed by one more than 3 kilometers (10,000 feet) long on the reclaimed island built atop Fiery Cross Reef in the Spratlys, the satellite photos show. Another runway is being built on Subi Reef, with signs of similar work underway on nearby Mischief Reef.

Patrols by fighter jets based on the islands, most likely temporarily given the salty climate and frequent storms, could serve to intimidate other claimants, especially the Philippines and Vietnam. That could also complicate regular operations by US forces which insist on freedom of navigation and overflight over the entire sea. "In periods of tension, the intimidation value of air patrols from the islands would be considerable," Graham said.

### Highly vulnerable to bombing

The airfields would allow Chinese aircraft to refuel, repair and if necessary, rearm without having to fly the more than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) to the nearest Chinese air base on Hainan island, said Hans Kristensen, a China security expert with the Federation of American Scientists. They would also be highly vulnerable to bombing in an actual conflict, although their presence alone would require additional planning and effort by opponents. Short of that, the issue grows murkier and more troublesome, especially if China were to announce a zone of air control over all or part of the South China Sea. In that case, the airstrips could be launching points for patrols, enforcement operations and possibly strikes. China announced an initial air defense identification zone over much of the East China Sea in late 2013, a designation the US, Japan and others refused to recognize. In early December, China conducted what its air force spokesman Shen Jinke described as the latest "routine patrol" through the zone, featuring aircraft including H-6K long-range bombers, fighter jets and early warning aircraft.

Questioned on plans for a South China Sea zone, Defense Ministry spokesman Wu Qian said that would depend on threats to China's interests and security. "Therefore we will take into consideration a number of factors in making the decision," Wu said. — AP



**MANILA:** In this file photo, protesters display placards during a rally at the Chinese Consulate at the financial district of Makati city, east of Manila, Philippines to protest moves by China in "fortifying" its claims at the disputed Spratlys Islands in the South China Sea. — AP

## CHINESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL DENOUNCES FAKE BUDDHAS

**BEIJING:** A senior Chinese government official said fake living Buddhas were using donations to support pro-independence activities in Tibet and called on local authorities to take action against them, according to state media. Local governments in Tibet should cooperate with their counterparts in eastern and central China and "take joint action to contain the phenomenon of fake living Buddhas", Zhu Weiqun, chairman of the ethnic and religious affairs committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, told state television on Saturday.

The government is building a database of legal living Buddhas, and may eventually make it public, the online edition of the official China Youth Daily yesterday quoted Zhu as saying. Tibetan Buddhism holds that the soul of a senior lama, or monk, is reincarnated in the body of a child who would then grow up to become a so-called living Buddha. As of 2007, there were more than 100 living Buddhas in Tibet, according to the official China Daily. The Chinese government has said it must approve the next Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader

of Tibet. The Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959 after an abortive uprising against Chinese rule. He has said the title of Dalai Lama could end when he dies. The search for a living Buddha such as the Dalai Lama is complex, involving divination, interpreting dreams, oracles and prayer, according to Tibetan Buddhist tradition. On state television on Saturday, Zhu made no mention of Baima Aose, a self-proclaimed living Buddha in Hong Kong who came under fire from practitioners after he ordained Chinese actor Zhang Tielin as a living Buddha instead of via the traditional search process.

China's official Tibet website said a Tibetan monastery has called Baima Aose a "fake". Fake living Buddhas swindle money from practitioners in eastern and central China and trick women into having sex with them, Zhu said, adding that they then return to Tibet and engage in illegal "splittist activities". The Dalai Lama has denied Chinese charges he wants Tibetan independence or that he promotes violence, saying he only wants genuine autonomy for his homeland. — Reuters

## AIRPORT REOPENS IN CHENNAI

**CHENNAI:** India's main airport in flood-devastated Tamil Nadu state reopened yesterday as emergency workers strove to help thousands of residents forced to flee their inundated homes. The international airport in the state capital Chennai had closed on Wednesday leaving thousands of passengers stranded, after record rains worsened flooding that has claimed nearly 300 lives since November 9. "There was no damage to the runway. It remained under water for a few days but has been cleared now," national Aviation Minister Mahesh Sharma said as passengers started to gather at the terminal.

"We had a few relief flights yesterday from the airport and today commercial flights have resumed their services." Thousands of residents have been rescued by boat or plucked from rooftops after the floods left much of Chennai, a city of more than four million, underwater. Power supplies and phone networks were also hit. Soldiers and other emergency workers who poured into the southeastern state have now switched to rushing food, clean drinking water and medical supplies to hard-hit residents.

"The army has... distributed relief materials including water and food to over 20,000 people," said Colonel Rohan Anand. But rain was again falling in Chennai yesterday, threatening to hamper relief efforts along with attempts to clear roads of water-logged debris.

Anger is mounting among some residents who accuse local authorities of failing to work swiftly to help those affected. Padmavathy said she had been stuck on the first floor of her home for days after waist-deep water swept through her north Chennai neighborhood. "None of the politicians or volunteers have approached us for the past couple of days. Many of us stayed indoors and starved," the mother of two told AFP. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described the floods as a consequence of climate change, as top negotiators meet in Paris to try to agree on reducing the rate of global warming. Experts have said poor urban planning had likely worsened the disaster. India suffers severe flooding every year during the annual monsoon rains from June to September. — AFP



**CHENNAI:** Destroyed vehicles are seen as floodwaters recede yesterday. — AFP

## WOMEN GETTING MORE INTERESTED...

Continued from Page 1

were charged in April with plotting to build a bomb for an attack. "Unlike in the Middle East or even Europe, it is indeed rare for a woman to be involved in such a shooting in the US," said Oren Segal, director of the ADL's Center on Extremism. He said IS "has made it a priority to reach and recruit women, so perhaps we are starting to see the results of those efforts."

There's no single answer for why the group has succeeded in attracting women, but law enforcement officials cite propaganda directed at that population. Even as IS spotlights decapitations of captives, recruitment videos that show smiling children paint a family-friendly portrait and suggest a role for women who join the self-described caliphate in Iraq and Syria. The goal is to entice women to become brides for the jihadi fighters and help expand the group's regional dominance. IS "likes to say it's not a terrorist group, but it's really a state or a movement," said Max Abrahms, a terrorism expert at Northeastern University.

The FBI is investigating the shootings at the social services facility in San Bernardino as an act of terrorism. Comey said agents have found signs of radicalization, though no indication that the couple was part of a larger cell or network. At the center of the investigation is Malik, born in Pakistan and

described by family lawyers as a quiet and devout Muslim who moved to the US in July 2014 and married a month later. A US official says she used a Facebook alias to praise the Islamic State in a post around the time she and her husband, Syed Farook, opened fire in combat-style gear on a holiday party of his co-workers. The official was not authorized to discuss the case publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. It's rare for husband-wife pairs to team up in violence. Among the more recent examples is Jerad and Amanda Miller, who harbored extremist views and went on a June 2014 shooting rampage in Las Vegas that left two police officers and a civilian dead. The Millers died in a shootout with police.

Before that were Holly Grigsby and David Pedersen, a white-supremacist couple now serving life sentences in connection with the 2011 murders of four people in Washington state, Oregon and California.

Even the most sophisticated electronic surveillance tools can fail to pick up a plot hatched by a couple who spend hours communicating face to face in the privacy of their home. "Usually when terrorist plots are broken up, it's by intercepting communications among members. But if they're living together, it would be much harder," Abrahms said. "They don't need to leave the house," he added. "They don't even need to leave the bed." — AP

## COLOMBIA FINDS TREASURE GALLEON

Continued from Page 1

The San Jose was sunk in June 1708 near the Islas del Rosario, off Colombia's Caribbean coast, during combat with British ships attempting to take its cargo, part of the War of Spanish Succession. The galleon was the main ship in a treasure fleet carrying gold, silver and other valuable items from Spain's American colonies to King Philip V. Only a handful of the ship's crew of 600 survived when the San Jose sank. A team of Colombian and foreign researchers, including a veteran of the group that discovered the wreck of the Titanic in 1985, studied winds and currents of the Caribbean 307 years ago and delved into colonial archives in Spain and Colombia searching for clues. Experts confirmed that they found the San Jose on Nov 27 "in a place never before referenced by previous research," Santos said. At least five other shipwrecks were found when searching the ocean floor. The

experts confirmed that they located the San Jose, which was lying on its side, because the ship was carrying unique bronze cannons with engraved dolphins. "The amount and type of the material leave no doubt of the identity" of the shipwreck, said Ernesto Montenegro, head of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History. A US company, the Sea Search Armada, claimed to have earlier found the wreck, but the find was not confirmed and a legal dispute broke out with the government over ownership rights that was ultimately resolved in a US court in Colombia's favor.

There could be up to 1,000 shipwrecks off the Caribbean coast of Colombia, but of those only between six and 10 had large treasure cargos, anthropologist Fabian Sanabria told AFP. The biggest find, and the most sought after, was the San Jose, Sanabria said. The discovery "is an unprecedented event for the country," said Cartagena Mayor Dionisio Velez. — AFP

## ASSAD SAYS BRITAIN'S SYRIA STRIKES 'ILLEGAL'

Continued from Page 1

Britain began its bombing campaign early on Thursday, hitting an oil field held by IS just hours after a decisive parliamentary vote authorized air strikes. Momentum to join the air campaign grew after IS militants claimed a deadly series of attacks on Paris last month which killed 130 people and wounded more than 350. In arguing in favor of the strikes, Prime Minister David Cameron's claimed there were 70,000 moderate Syrian forces on the ground who could help secure territory cleared by air strikes, prompting ridicule from Assad, who denounced it as "classical farce". "Where are the 70,000 moderates he is talking about? There is no 70,000. There is no 7,000," he said.

In late September, Russia began its own bombing campaign in Syria in support of Assad over a year after a US-led coalition began its strikes targeting the IS group. Russia is coordinating its air strikes with Damascus, unlike the US-led coalition, whose action has been criticized by Assad and his government as ineffectual. Assad said the Russians had entered the conflict in a "legal way" - with Syria's permission.

While the western bombing campaign has fuelled extremism, Assad believes that two months of Russian air strikes with ground support from the Syrian army has actually damaged the Islamists' capabilities. More than 250,000 people have been killed since the Syrian conflict erupted in March 2011 with protests against Assad's regime. — AFP

## OPEC POLICY RISKS FURTHER PRICE PRESSURE

Continued from Page 1

Despite oil prices plunging by more than 60 percent in 18 months, OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia and the cartel's other Gulf state members are defying calls to reduce output, which has been a year-long strategy of attempting to preserve market share and fend off competition from non-OPEC and world-leading producers Russia and the United States. In June last year, crude had traded above \$100 a barrel, but has since plunged on a global supply glut, weak demand growth and a strong dollar.

High supplies are largely due to the arrival on markets of oil extracted from North American shale rock. However, while oil prices remain above the current \$40-a-barrel level on world markets, investment in US production is expected to stay resilient. It is when oil goes under this level for a sustained period of time that new investment in shale production risks dropping off, according to Natixis bank analyst Abhishek Deshpande.

OPEC's policy of "keeping high production and keeping prices under pressure has taken more time" than it would have expected, he told AFP on the sidelines of the Vienna gathering. Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh meanwhile noted that while the level of shale oil production hasn't decreased due to OPEC policy, neither has it "increased significantly". But he acknowledged also that "OPEC member

countries have lost so much money and it doesn't seem we can change the situation in the short term".

Saudi Arabia on Friday repeated the kingdom's stance that it would be willing to cut as long as non-OPEC producers also reduce their output. "We have said on more than one occasion that we are willing to cooperate with anyone that will help balance the market... with us," Saudi oil minister Ali Al-Naimi told reporters. OPEC's poorer nations - notably Venezuela, Ecuador and Algeria - had led the calls for a cut to help boost prices and in turn their badly-hit revenues. "The on-going supply surplus should continue to exert heavy pressure on oil prices in the short term," said Fawad Razaqada, analyst at Gain Capital trading group. "This could force some weaker (non-OPEC) oil producers out of the market," he said, resulting in tighter supplies next year. The cartel meanwhile gave no precise collective output target in Friday's final communique.

"In our view, the lack of guidance on a production quota underlines the discord among members," said Barclays analyst Miswin Mahesh. "Past communiques have at least included statements to adhere, strictly adhere, or maintain output in line with the production target. This one glaringly did not." For OPEC, managing the impossible trinity of achieving higher market share, higher prices and higher demand through a nominal target which members continue to breach continues to be difficult. — AFP



DUBAI: A picture taken in the early hours of yesterday shows hot air balloons flying over Dubai buildings as part of the "Dubai International Balloon Fiesta" event. — AFP

## MODI MOCKED, 'AMMA' HECKLED AFTER FLOODS

Continued from Page 1

2.5 m of water, trapping people on rooftops with no communication. There was further revulsion after a party legislator put up a poster of Jayalithaa lifting a baby above the floodwaters, in a scene from a blockbuster movie. "Adding salt to the wounds," said one Twitter post. Avadi Kumar, a spokesman of her ruling AIADMK party, said there was anger among the people but the administration was doing all it could to bring relief. "It is impossible to reach all areas immediately or be present everywhere at all times."

Modi's own promise to voters of good days to come for India is also starting to face disenchantment, 18 months into his five-year term, with key reforms stalled by bureaucratic inertia and political gridlock. Ambitious initiatives, such as a "Clean India" campaign, have made little headway - even as Modi has built up huge followings on social media and addressed enthusiastic diaspora Indians at packed stadiums on his many trips overseas.

"If today he appears to have lost control over his own narrative,

it is his own fault," commentator Tavleen Singh wrote in Sunday's Indian Express, urging Modi to hire a professional media team. Modi does not have an official spokesperson. Jayalithaa, 67, in the past considered as a possible prime ministerial candidate backed by regional groups, faces an election in Tamil Nadu next year. Modi's nationalist party has little presence in Tamil Nadu, a state of 70 million. It would rather the iron-fisted Jayalithaa stays in power, believing she is more inclined to back his reform agenda in parliament than her rivals.

But there are concerns around her health and that she may have to curtail her campaign. Earlier this year a higher court acquitted her in a graft case for which was briefly jailed which had caused an outpouring of anger from her supporters. Some lay down on roads and tried to persuade bus drivers to go over them. "She is supposed to be a fantastic administrator. But this time there was no presence of government at all. Ordinary people did all the work that government and police were supposed to do," said S Raja, one flood-hit resident of Chennai. — Reuters

## POLICE PROBE LONDON TUBE STABBING

Continued from Page 1

Saturday's attack came at the end of a week in which the British parliament voted to extend air strikes on the Islamic State jihadist group from Iraq into Syria. The attack also comes less than a month after the Nov 13 terror attacks in Paris, claimed by IS, which killed 130 people. Police said the stabbed 56-year-old man was in a stable condition in an east London hospital and his injuries were not believed to be life-threatening. A second man sustained a minor injury but did not require medical assistance, while a woman was threatened by the suspect but was not injured, police said.

Amateur video shows a pool of blood and bloody footprints at the ticket gates of the suburban Leytonstone Tube station. Shouts are heard as the suspect is seen restraining with people before swinging at one of them. Officers shout "Drop the knife!" and fire Taser electric stun guns. "Who is this idiot?" one onlooker says of the suspect, adding: "Yes! Stupid idiot," after the man is Tasered.

Officers shout "Put the knife down!" and "Drop it now!" at the stunned man, who does drop the short-bladed knife as he quivers on the ground. On his front, the man is handcuffed behind his back while another officer pins him down with his knee and passers-by are told to get back. One man then shouts at the suspect: "You ain't

no Muslim, bruv! You're no Muslim, bruv! You ain't no Muslim!" The hashtag #YouAintNoMuslimBruv was trending on Twitter on Sunday as people reacted to the news.

Salim Patel, 59, who runs the station shop, said: "I saw the guy attacking the victim, punching him so hard. The victim was screaming 'please, somebody help me. Help!' The attacker started kicking him on the floor. I think the victim was unconscious, he passed out. Then the attacker took a knife out and started stabbing him as he lay on the floor." Witness Khayam told the BBC that when the suspect was taken to a police van, "I saw pedestrians shouting at him... one pedestrian tried to throw a bottle."

Police said they were initially alerted at 7:06 pm (1906 GMT) Saturday to the "violent unprovoked knife attack". Officers attempted to engage with the man but were threatened with violence, police said. He was arrested at 7:14 pm (1914 GMT). Britain's national terror threat level was raised in Aug 2014 to severe, the second-highest of five levels, meaning an attack is considered highly likely. London's transport system was hit in July 2005 by a series of suicide bomb attacks that killed 52 people. A spokeswoman for Prime Minister David Cameron's Downing Street office said: "We are monitoring the situation closely as further details emerge". Leytonstone station was open again yesterday, with a police officer standing guard outside. — AFP

## GOVERNOR OF ADEN KILLED IN CAR BOMB

Continued from Page 1

ambush in southeastern Hadramawt province. Its statement yesterday threatened more attacks. The United Arab Emirates, whose forces are playing a pivotal role in supporting Hadi and are present in Aden, condemned Saad's killing. "Such crimes will not weaken our common determination to bring back security and stability to the Yemen," said the UAE's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash.

Saad's killing represents another blow for Hadi, who has struggled to secure the city since his forces and allies launched a wide-spread operation in July to retake five southern provinces - including Aden - from the Houthis. The counterattack has stalled around Taez, a strategic southwestern city under siege by the rebels and their allies. The bombing came a day after the UN envoy to Yemen held talks with Hadi in Aden aimed at kick-starting peace talks.

Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed met Hadi to seek his agreement to convene negotiations with the rebels in Geneva next week, an official close to the president told AFP. But the mission was "difficult", said the source, accusing the rebels of dragging their feet on imple-

menting UN Security Council Resolution 2216 which calls for them to withdraw from occupied territory.

Foreign Minister Abdel Malak Al-Mekhlafi told AFP that "the putschists are refusing to lay down their arms or to allow the government to carry out its duties" from Sanaa. "They have not announced their list of negotiators" for the talks "and are trying to escalate the situation on the ground by bombing residential districts of Taez". In a protest sent to the UN, Yemen's minister in charge of human rights, Ezzedine al-Isbahi, condemned the "massacres and atrocities" allegedly committed in Taez by the rebels that he said had killed 33 civilians last week, including four children.

The United Nations says more than 5,700 people have been killed in Yemen, almost half of them civilians, since the Saudi-led air campaign began in March in support of the government. In Aden on Saturday, gunmen shot dead the presiding judge of a terrorism court, Mohsen Mohamed Alwan, and four of his bodyguards, a security source said. Police Colonel Al-Khadher Ali Ahmed was gunned down in a separate attack. And yesterday, police colonel Antar Al-Bakhshi was shot dead by gunmen in Inmaa district, west of Aden, a security official said. — AFP

Kuwait Times

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## Focus

RUBIO SHOWS  
CONSERVATIVE  
GRAVITAS

By Michael Mathes

Donald Trump grabs headlines with his unshakable self-glorification. But better-informed, increasingly confident rival Marco Rubio is making a play for the Republican presidential nomination, and winning over skeptics in early-voting New Hampshire. Rubio is the 44-year-old US senator from Florida with the million-watt smile, an affinity for hip-hop music and a propensity to ruffle establishment feathers in Washington. But at a Friday campaign stop, he came across as a national security expert playing up his foreign policy fluency to a crowd shaken by recent spasms of extremist violence.

And he wasted little time before ripping the Obama administration - and Democrats like presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton - for urging stricter gun laws immediately after Wednesday's San Bernardino shooting that killed 14 people. "Gun control" is not the answer, Rubio told about 180 voters at a Seacoast Republican Women's luncheon at a country club in the small town of Greenland. "We need bomb control" because the California attackers had possessed pipe bombs, he said. "We need terrorist control."

Rubio is threading a political needle in the 2016 race. He lies between the uncompromising ideological warfare being waged by rival candidate Ted Cruz and the establishmentarian Jeb Bush, whose campaign has struggled. Perhaps the best communicator in today's Republican Party, Rubio is offering his brand of pragmatic conservatism, and he is being rewarded at the polls.

Trump remains the frontrunner nationally and in New Hampshire, but Rubio has surged into second, ahead of neurosurgeon Ben Carson, who is fading, and fellow Senator Cruz, recent polls show. If foreign policy and national security are brought off the backburner, where they usually sit during Republican primaries, Rubio stands to gain considerably in his party's crowded nomination race. "I think Rubio is on everyone's 'maybe' list," New Hampshire political strategist Fergus Cullen, a former state Republican Party chairman, told AFP.

As the women waited for Rubio to join them for lunch, the acronym ABT - "anyone but Trump" - was in the air. "I'm having a hard time with him," Pam DuBois, 69, said of the brash celebrity billionaire. "He doesn't strike me as presidential." New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has impressed her, especially with his experience as a federal prosecutor. But DuBois has yet to make up her mind, "and I haven't ruled Rubio out," she said.

Rubio offers a mixture of fear and optimism on the campaign trail: Dire warnings of "radical apocalyptic jihadists" and Russia's "gangster" President Vladimir Putin are followed by reminders that America remains the land of freedom and opportunity. He has grown in confidence following strong performances in recent debates where he bested his onetime political mentor Bush. Following last month's Paris bloodbath, the suspected terrorist attack in California and increasing Middle East upheaval, Rubio has come to be trusted as a knowledgeable conservative voice.

"Being president isn't just about seeing what's in front of you, it's about understanding what would happen next if you don't do what needs to be done," Rubio told the luncheon, noting how he had accurately predicted Russia would start a bombing campaign in Syria. "I believe that over the last few years no one has shown better judgment or better foresight on these issues than I have."

## Playing it Safe?

Republican Congressman Chris Stewart, who attended the Greenland event, claimed he was one of the first national lawmakers to throw his support behind Rubio. "I've been a fan of his since he emerged on the national stage," Stewart, a former Air Force pilot who highlighted the importance of defense and national security in the 2016 election, told AFP. "I want to win the next election, and I think this is the guy who's most likely to lead a Republican victory."

But to some voters in New Hampshire, where retail, face-to-face politics is a cherished tradition to be flouted at a candidate's peril, Rubio has yet to engage as deeply in the state as residents here would like. While Rubio has at least done his share of pressing the flesh, posing for selfies, and engaging one on one with voters, Trump has opted instead for larger, more impersonal rallies where voters are kept at a distance. "There aren't 250 people in New Hampshire who have shaken his hand," Cullen, the strategist, said of Trump. — AFP

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## GI JANE COMING, BUT IT MIGHT TAKE TIME

By Thomas Watkins

Come the New Year, the US military will open all fighting positions to women - but don't expect to see a female American commando leading a raid into Syria just yet. Officials say it could take years for women to percolate into some of the military's most specialized roles, including the elite special operations forces that have long epitomized macho soldiering. "Implementation won't happen overnight," Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said Thursday as he announced the Obama administration's "No Exceptions" policy unlocking every occupation in America's vast military.

Currently, women only account for about 15.6 percent of the 1.34 million active-duty personnel in the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force. When the new rules kick in, 52 military occupations - some 220,000 jobs - will accept female applicants, who must still pass the same rigorous physical tests as men. "For the 52 occupations that were completely closed, we have to start at the beginning," a senior defense official said. "You have to recruit new recruits, they have to go to boot camp, they have to go to the (specialized) school."

For instance, it takes at least a year and a half to train a Navy SEAL before he (or she) can join a unit. Further training

takes about another 12 months before deployment. The Pentagon is increasingly relying on commandos to conduct raids in Iraq and Syria as America fights the Islamic State group.

## A Desirable Job?

Another limiting factor is how many women actually want combat jobs. General David Perkins, who heads the US Army Training and Doctrine Command, this summer said military studies and a look at the experience of Canada, which has for years allowed women in combat, showed few women are likely to choose such roles. "It just probably won't be a lot," he said. One reason is women are "dramatically less inclined" to choose infantry, armored units or artillery than their male counterparts, he said.

In Canada, for instance, where women were permitted to join combat ranks as early as 1989, their numbers in those roles remain low - making up 0.5 percent of Canadian infantry, two percent of armored units and four percent of artillery, according to Perkins. But Nancy Duff Campbell, co-president of the National Women's Law Center, said more women will eventually seek out combat roles. "When women are given the chance, they seize it," she told AFP. "It may be a small group at the beginning, but that group may be growing, like

what we've seen in sports."

Aside from Canada, the US military follows in the footsteps of other fighting forces around the world allowing women in combat. Among them are Australia, Denmark, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa and Sweden. A RAND Corporation study found women generally adapt well into combat positions - provided the top brass are committed and involved in the transition.

But not everyone agrees women should be in combat. The Marine Corps called for a partial exemption, after it argued mixed-gender combat units were less effective. And a study obtained by the Defense One military news site found that SEALs, Air Force special operations forces and non-commissioned officers were still strongly opposed to women joining special operations ranks.

Some women have spoken out too. "Female Marines who want to stir the pot by joining the infantry ranks are more interested in their careers than the needs of the Corps - they are selfish," Marine Captain Lauren Serrano wrote in the Marine Corps Times. The new policy trumps such concerns, and Carter and other military officials stress that over time, women in combat will actually improve "combat effectiveness". They point to other changes - such as letting gays serve openly - as disproving naysayer gloom.

## Women for the Draft

The changes could ultimately have far-reaching impacts for all young American women. Though the US military has been an all-volunteer force since near the end of the Vietnam War, in 1973, all men aged 18-25 must nonetheless register for the draft in case there is a national crisis and re-institution of mandatory conscription. But the National Coalition for Men - a San-Diego based rights group - argues the law is sexist because it refers specifically to "male persons" in stating who must register.

"Failing to register is a felony, but only for men, punishable by fine, imprisonment or both," the group's president Harry Crouch said. The organization has a lawsuit that will be heard by a federal appeals court next week in California. The suit has been tossed as not "ripe" but the group hopes Carter's announcement will convince the court to reconsider. For women to be forced to register for the draft, Congress would have to change the law. Duff Campbell of the National Women's Law Center agreed women should sign up for possible conscription. "If we want women to have an equal opportunity to serve in all positions, they should have an equal obligation to register for the draft," she said. — AFP

## TRUMP MAKES MONEY OFF THE NAME 'CENTRAL PARK'

By Jonathan Lemire

Donald Trump is arguably New York City's most famous resident, and he's made some of his money off the name of one of the city's most famous public landmarks: Central Park. The leading Republican presidential candidate first applied for a trademark to use the words "Central Park" on merchandise more than two decades ago, when the park had a far less glamorous reputation than it does today. Since then, Trump has used the nonexclusive trademark to brand furniture, chandeliers, pillows and even key chains.

A Trump spokesman declined to say how much Trump has earned from the trademark, but noted the developer's deep connections to the park. Trump once owned the Plaza Hotel along Central Park South, operates a skyscraper hotel overlooking the park and famously renovated the park's once-drodden ice rink. "Mr Trump, over the course of his career, has owned and developed some of the most iconic buildings in the city, many of which ... sit only footsteps away from Central Park," said Alan Garten, executive vice president and general counsel to The Trump Organization.

Since it is a public space, no one can put an exclusive trademark on the words "Central Park." But, as first reported by cable news channel NY1, records show that Trump is the single biggest private, for-profit holder of Central Park trademarks on specific goods. It was undeniably a savvy move. His first application came in 1991, when the city's violent crime rate was near its height and the park often conjured up fears of urban danger. There were 2,154 murders in the city that year, as opposed to 328 last year, and 1991 was just two years removed from the Central Park jogger case in which a woman was attacked and raped while running through the park.

According to the records kept by the US Patent and Trademark Office, Trump first received permission to use Central Park for

parking garage services, and later expanded the trademark as the park became synonymous with the high-priced real estate that surrounds it in a safer, more affluent New York. A 2007 trademark allowed him to put the park's name on dozens of Trump-branded furniture and lighting options. Beds, tables, desks, lamps, flashlights, picture frames and throw pillows all bore the names "Central Park" and "Donald Trump." A glossy, 44-page furniture catalog boasted photos of the "elegant and rich" furnishings with stylized shots of the park and Trump.

Many of Trump's Central Park products are not currently in production, but they can be found in some discount stores and gift shops. The park isn't the only New York-area landmark on which Trump has filed a trademark. He owns one for "Westchester," the county north of the city, that was the namesake of a furniture line, and one for "Fifth Avenue," to

label items within his casino business.

## Worth

Trademark experts say it's difficult to precisely gauge how much a name is worth. "The question would be, how much more likely is someone to buy something called 'Central Park' over the name of some other landmark?" said June Besek, a Columbia Law School professor with an expertise on intellectual property issues. "But if people have a positive association with 'Central Park' - or a positive association with simply 'Trump' - that would clearly be worth something."

The park is jointly operated by the city and the private Central Park Conservancy. Neither has any ability to revoke a trademark from Trump or any other owner. The nonprofit conservancy sells items such as sweat shirts and snow globes, which, unlike Trump's products, can carry the official park logo. "Nobody has

ownership of the words 'Central Park.' It is a public space, with a city-owned logo," said Monica Klein, a spokeswoman for Mayor Bill de Blasio. "When individuals or companies attempt to infringe on city-owned trademarks, we take appropriate legal actions."

The city owns the rights to more than 200 trademarks and stepped up its efforts to acquire new ones and protect existing ones, including the city's police and fire departments, after demand for their merchandise grew dramatically after the Sept 11 attacks. When Trump launched his presidential campaign in June with a speech in which he said Mexican immigrants were "bringing drugs" and were "rapists," the city reviewed millions of dollars' worth of contracts it has with him, including for a golf course and skating rinks, but found no legal way to cancel them. De Blasio, a Democrat, has said he wouldn't do any new business with Trump. — AP



In this Sept 24, 2015 photo, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump waves to the crowd gathered in front of Trump Tower ahead of the arrival of the pope's motorcade for an appearance in New York's Central Park. — AP

## MELO RELEASED AFTER NIGHT OF OBSERVATION

**MILAN:** Inter Milan midfielder Felipe Melo was released from hospital yesterday after being given the all-clear on a head injury suffered in a 1-0 home win over Genoa. Brazil international Melo clashed with Chilean teammate Gary Medel during the opening half of Saturday's Serie A fixture at the San Siro and was replaced at half-time after reporting he was suffering dizzy spells. Melo was taken to hospital but discharged on Sunday morning after being given the all-clear. "Felipe Melo is fine and has already been dismissed following a night of observation at the hospital," said a Twitter post from Inter on the club's official website. Before leaving the San Siro on Saturday Melo told reporters: "I don't remember a thing." Medel was left with a nasty graze to the head before the Chilean suffered more pain in the second half after clashing with Genoa's Nicolas Burdisso. Inter, who saw Danilo D'Ambrosio sent off late in the game for a second bookable offence, held on to go two points clear at the top of Serie A although Napoli will restore their one-point lead with a win at Bologna. — AFP



## ONE-FIFTH OF ENGLISH REFEREES ABUSED

**LONDON:** Nearly one-fifth of soccer referees in England who responded to a survey say they have been subjected to physical abuse, according to a BBC radio programme broadcast yesterday. A study by academics from three universities received responses from more than 2,000 referees, mainly at grassroots level. Nineteen percent said they had been physically abused at some time and 60 percent experienced regular verbal abuse. The Football Association (FA), which implemented a "Respect" programme for players, officials and spectators seven years ago, said the number of yellow cards for dissent by players had declined by almost a quarter in that time and that serious assaults were "few and far between." "Across an estimated 1.2 million games last season the number of reported (serious) incidents amounted to a tiny fraction of one percent - which puts the scale of the problem into context," an FA spokesman told the BBC. — Reuters

## INDIAN OPENER VIJAY FINED FOR DISSENT

**NEW DELHI:** Indian opener Murali Vijay was fined 30 percent of his match fee yesterday for showing dissent at an umpire's decision during the fourth and final Test against South Africa in New Delhi. Vijay, who tried to evade a bouncer from paceman Morne Morkel on the third day of the game, was given out caught behind by umpire Kumar Dharmasena. A visibly disappointed Vijay gestured that he was hit on the arm guard before walking off the ground. "Vijay was fined 30 per cent of his match fee by (match referee) Jeff Crowe," the International Cricket Council said in a press release. His actions amounted to breaching Article 2.1.5 of the ICC code of conduct, which relates to "showing dissent at an umpire's decision during an international match". The charge was levelled by Kumar Dharmasena and Bruce Oxenford, the onfield umpires, and C.K. Nandan, the third umpire. All level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand and a maximum penalty of 50 percent of a player's match fee. — AFP



# CAMEL RACE HELD AT KUWAIT CAMEL RACE CLUB

**KUWAIT:** Under the auspices of the heirs of the late Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and with the attendance of Sheikh Abdullah Khaled Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah and a large crowd of expatriates in Kuwait,

Al-Zafaranah (owned by Ali Mane' Al-Ajmi) won the first place in a 3-kilometer camel race recently held at Kuwait Camel Race Club to commemorate Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak. Wedd (owned by Saad Al-

Rasheedi) won the second place while Nehaya (owned by Faisal Taleb Al-Marri) won the third place. Sheikh Abdullah Khaled Fahad Al-Ahmed honored the winners in a special ceremony.

He also thanked the organizers for reviving such a traditional ancestors' sport. He also noted that Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mubarak had always supported camel sports and that his descendants would always follow his steps.

Towards the end of the ceremony, a special draw was held with the spectators' tickets offering the winners valuable prizes including trips to Germany, US and Canada. —Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat



**FEDERAL WAY:** Michael Phelps swims in the 200 Meter Butterfly finals at the AT&T Winter National Championships at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center on Saturday in Federal Way, Washington. — AP

# MICHAEL PHELPS WINS 200 BUTTERFLY

**FEDERAL WAY:** Michael Phelps was pleased with his third national title in three days, viewing his dominant performance Saturday as a stepping stone toward his fifth Olympic berth. The 18-time Olympic champion won the 200-meter butterfly in the US Winter National Championships after winning the 200 individual medley Thursday and the 100 butterfly Friday at the King Aquatic Center.

Phelps finished in 1 minute, 56.11 seconds, leading comfortably at each turn. He set the world record in the event in 2009 at 1:51.51. Chase Kalisz was second at 1:57.19. "Winning's always important, but for me it's more time-based right now," the 30-year-old Phelps said. "For one, I'm happy I didn't get run down by Chase in the last 50, that's one thing, but just for me to be able to see progress; when you are training and it is hard and it's brutal and there are some days where you just don't want to be

there, if you're actually seeing success, it makes you want to go back."

"This will make me hungrier. Even though I did win and I swam good times, there are better times that I can swim before Olympic trials and that's what I'm focused on." By the time he made the first turn at 25:27 in front of an enthusiastic capacity crowd, the race was essentially for second place. But Phelps said it provided a measuring stick for where he needs to be en route to the Olympics.

"These are the stepping stones," Phelps said. "For me, the fastest I went last year was like 1:58, 1:57, so I know that I'm ahead of where I was last year and I know that I'm doing the right things in making steps forward to be able to get to the end result where I want to be. It was a struggle in season last year. I can remember a couple meets where I was beyond frustrated and I'll leave it at that." Four-time

Olympic champion Missy Franklin won the 200 backstroke in 2:07.87 and finished fourth in the 100 freestyle. She won the 100 backstroke on Friday and finished second in the 200 freestyle. Haley Anderson, who won the silver medal in the 10-kilometer open water in the 2012 Olympics, won the 800 freestyle and the 200 butterfly. Other women's winners were Simon Manuel in the 100 freestyle and Lilly King in the 200 breaststroke. Other men's winners were Michael McBroom in the 1,500 freestyle, four-time Olympic champ Matt Grevers in the 200 backstroke, Santo Condorelli in the 100 freestyle, and Carlos Claverie in the 100 breaststroke.

Three-time Olympic gold medalist Nathan Adrian, from nearby Bremerton, received a huge ovation when announced for his race, but finished third in the 100 freestyle. He won the 50 freestyle Thursday. — AP

## NONU IN WINNING TOULON START, TOULOUSE KEEP UP PRESSURE

**PARIS:** All Black centre Ma'a Nonu enjoyed a winning Top 14 debut for Toulon on Saturday as the European champions went top of the table with a crushing 53-16 win over Agen.

Toulouse moved into second spot, also on 32 points, with a 27-3 win over rock-bottom Oyonnax on the day that inspirational skipper Thierry Dusautoir announced his international retirement.

Nonu was paired with France international Mathieu Bastareaud, the midfield duo weighing as much as Toulon's two props, at a combined 233kg (514 pounds).

But it was the all-round game management and kicking skills of the much slighter figure of scrum-half Eric Escande, 23, that impressed, albeit behind a dominant pack, with an ever-eager backline outside him in an expensively assembled team boasting top players from eight different countries.

"It was good," said Nonu, capped 103 times by the All Blacks, with whom he has won two World Cups. "It's a beautiful crowd out there, good fans. It's my first game and I felt a bit rusty. It's been a long week - I've just found a house! But we're professional footy players so that's what we do and I hope to play better next week."

Agon fly-half Burton Francis traded an early penalty with Escande before Toulon lock Romain Taoffenua leapt over for the opening try from close range for the home side, the first of five converted by Escande. Agen kept in the game with a second penalty by Francis, but Toulon skipper Juan Martin Fernandez Lobbe was driven over from a lineout after Matt Giteau spurned a shot at the posts to go for the corner.

Francis nailed his third penalty as a lack of precision from Toulon allowed Agen to head into the half-time break just 17-9 down.

Toulon's forward power showed once again in the second period, English flanker Steffon Armitage driven over in exemplary style from another penalty touch. The visitors, however, hit straight back with an outstanding try through South African centre Johann Sadie.

A fumbled line-out take by Toulon's Springbok No 8 Duane Vermeulen was spun wide, Sadie giving before receiving the final pass and riding tackles from Australian pair Drew Mitchell and

Giteau to score a fantastic try, converted by Francis.

After 15 phases lasting more than two minutes, Toulon nabbed an attacking bonus point when Delon Armitage crossed in the corner after a smart floated pass from Wallaby wing James O'Connor.

A creaking Agen defence failed to cope when O'Connor linked up with replacement Bryan Habana, Giteau turning provider for Mitchell to run in a fifth try.

### Defeat for Genia

There was further woe for Agen when their New Zealand sevens winger George Tilsley was yellow carded for upending Habana with 20 minutes to play.

Immediately, Toulon turned the screw, Escande's clever chip allowing Habana to score unmarked. Escande was then on hand with a deft grubber that rebounded off the opposite corner flag for Mitchell to get a hand on for his second try.

Toulon were awarded a penalty try in the dying moments before Agen claimed a consolation try through full-back Mathieu Lamoulie, converted by Francis, on the full-time buzzer.

On the day that 34-year-old Dusautoir called time on his international career, the veteran flanker was back on club duty as his Toulouse side saw off Oyonnax 27-3, just two weeks after they had defeated the same opponents 24-18 in the European Champions Cup.

Australian loose forward Tala Gray scored two tries with former All Blacks star Luke McAlister adding a third as Toulouse warmed up for back-to-back European Cup dates with Ulster.

While Nonu enjoyed a winning start to his new life in France, it was a different story for Australian scrum-half Will Genia as champions Stade Francais slumped to a last-minute 24-21 loss to Bordeaux-Begles in Paris.

Despite being down to 14 men in the closing stages after Australian prop Sekope Kepu was sin-binned, Bordeaux scored a sensational try when 35-year-old South African scrum-half Heini Adams finished off a 50-metre move.

Castres claimed a third successive win with a 34-19, bonus-point triumph over Montpellier with backrow forward Alex Tulou scoring a hat-trick against his former club. — AFP



## LATE SHEIKH ALI SABAH AL-SALEM SHOOTING TOURNEY CONCLUDES

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The late Sheikh Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah Shooting Tournament concluded at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex on Saturday in the presence of Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the head of the National Security Department, Eng Duaij Al-Otaibi, President of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations, Obaid Al-Osaimi Secretary General of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federation and Eng Hussam Al-Roumi, KSSF board member.

Eng Duaij Al-Otaibi welcomed Sheikh Thamer, adding that Kuwait Shooting is honored by organizing this tournament because

of the status of the person it is named after. He said the tournament included Olympic skeet, trap, double trap, and air pistol and rifle and continued for three days with a large participation of male and female shooters.

Al-Otaibi said this tournament comes following successful participation of Kuwait shooting in the 13th Asian Shooting Tournament, which was held in Kuwait last month.

**RESULTS OF THE TOURNAMENT ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

**In the skeet men:** Abdallah Al-Rashidi, Saud Habib and Mansour Al-Rashidi.  
**In trap men:** Tami Al-Rashidi, Saad Al-

Hubaida and Marzouq Al-Waalan.

**In double trap men:** Saad Lafi Al-Mutairi, Fuhaid Al-Daihani and Jarrah Al-Shuwaier.  
**In trap women:** Asmaa Al-Qatami, Sarah Al-Hawal and Fatimah Abdelmalek.

**In skeet women:** Afrah Adel, Iman Al-Shamma and Munira Al-Subaie.

**In air pistol men:** Saad Al-Ajmi, Hamad Al-Namshan and Hassan Al-Mulla.  
**In air rifle men:** Abdallah Al-Harby, Mohammad Abdelrahman and Khalid Abdelsalam.

**In air pistol women:** Sheikha Al-Obaidli, Athari Gharban.

**In air rifle women:** Heba Irzouqi, Mariam Irzouqi and Fatima Abdelmalek.



**GOLD COAST:** Australia's Nathan Holman holds aloft the Kirkwood Cup following his victory at the Australian PGA championship golf tournament at Royal Pines on the Gold Coast yesterday. — AFP

## HOLMAN WINS AUSTRALIAN PGA

### FORMER LIVERPOOL'S ICON GERRARD TO PLAY IN KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** The committee organizing the opening ceremony of Jaber stadium on Dec 18 succeeded in attracting a major soccer legend and Liverpool's icon Steven Gerrard to be among world stars who will play Kuwaiti players.

Gerrard is the 15th player to join, as this will be his first visit to Kuwait. The committee will announce the rest of the names

today, Monday, while at the same time the committee made a major Arab surprise by announcing the presence of Egypt's Mohammed Aboutrika, who asked his fans to wait for him Dec 18th. Meanwhile, voting on the names of Kuwaiti players will be closed today at midnight, and the names will be announced tomorrow.



Steven Gerrard



Mohammed Aboutrika

**GOLD COAST:** Australian Nathan Holman won the European Tour co-sanctioned Australian PGA Championship in a three-way playoff at Royal Pines yesterday.

Holman won on the first play-off hole with a par from American Harold Varner III and South Africa's Dylan Frittelli.

Holman worked his way into contention for the play-off with a final round one-over 73 in tough playing conditions. It was the second consecutive year the Gold Coast tournament had been decided beyond the regulation 72 holes. But unlike last year's marathon seven-hole playoff between Australians Greg Chalmers, Adam Scott and Wade Ormsby, only one hole was needed.

Holman, 24, held his nerve to make par on the 18th hole—one of the toughest in the new-look back nine at Royal Pines—while Varner and Frittelli both made bogeys.

For his victory Holman will receive a full European Tour card for the next two years following a new co-sanctioning agreement with the Australian PGA. "It's huge. I didn't realise what was on the line, really," said Holman, who began the day two strokes off the pace.

"I did think I'd get to those events in the future, but to do it off the back of a victory is probably going to be better. "I've deserved it. It's stuff you dream of, playing golf as a kid." The last international player to win the event was New Zealand's Greg Turner in 1989.

Holman, Varner and Frittelli all finished on even-par 288 for the tournament, a reflection of the windy conditions and the uncompromising nature of the remodelled back nine.

Varner only narrowly missed a nine-foot putt at the last, which would have seen him claim outright victory. Holman looked poised to win much earlier until nerves set in and he gave up back-to-back bogeys on the final two holes—the only blemishes on his card aside from a double-bogey on the first.

Zander Lombard, the 20-year-old former South African amateur who was tied for the overnight lead with Varner and Frittelli, finished fourth after a four-over-par 76.

Only six players managed to complete their final rounds below par, with the best score coming from Adam Stephens and South African Colin Nel, who both fired two-under-par 70s. — AFP

## GARCIA WINS ASIAN TOUR AFTER FOUR-WAY PLAYOFF

**HO TRAM:** Sergio Garcia captured his first title in almost two years yesterday when he triumphed in a four-way playoff at the inaugural Ho Tram Open in Vietnam.

The Spaniard regained his composure after blowing a two-shot lead with a double bogey on the 17th hole to defeat India's Himmat Rai, Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant and Lin Wen-tang of Taiwan in a two-hole playoff.

Thaworn and Lin were eliminated after the first extra hole when they could only make par after Garcia drained a 35-foot putt for birdie and Rai matched him with a tap-in from five feet.

Garcia then beat Rai with a par on the second hole, after the Indian drove his tee shot into the bushes, to clinch his first title since the Qatar Masters in January 2014.

"Winning is never easy. I was fortunate and you have to be lucky to win," Garcia said.

"I was fortunate to get a second chance after I pretty much gave it away. I'm very happy as I haven't won in a while.

"After you've been up there and you don't win, a lot of things go through your mind and this win will help give me a little bit more confidence."

All four players finished the 72 regula-

tion holes tied at 14-under par after a dramatic ending at The Bluffs links course designed by Greg Norman.

Garcia, the highest-ranked player in the tournament at 12 in the world, appeared to have the title in the bag when he led by two shots with two holes to play but he stumbled with a double-bogey six at the penultimate hole, opening the door for rivals.

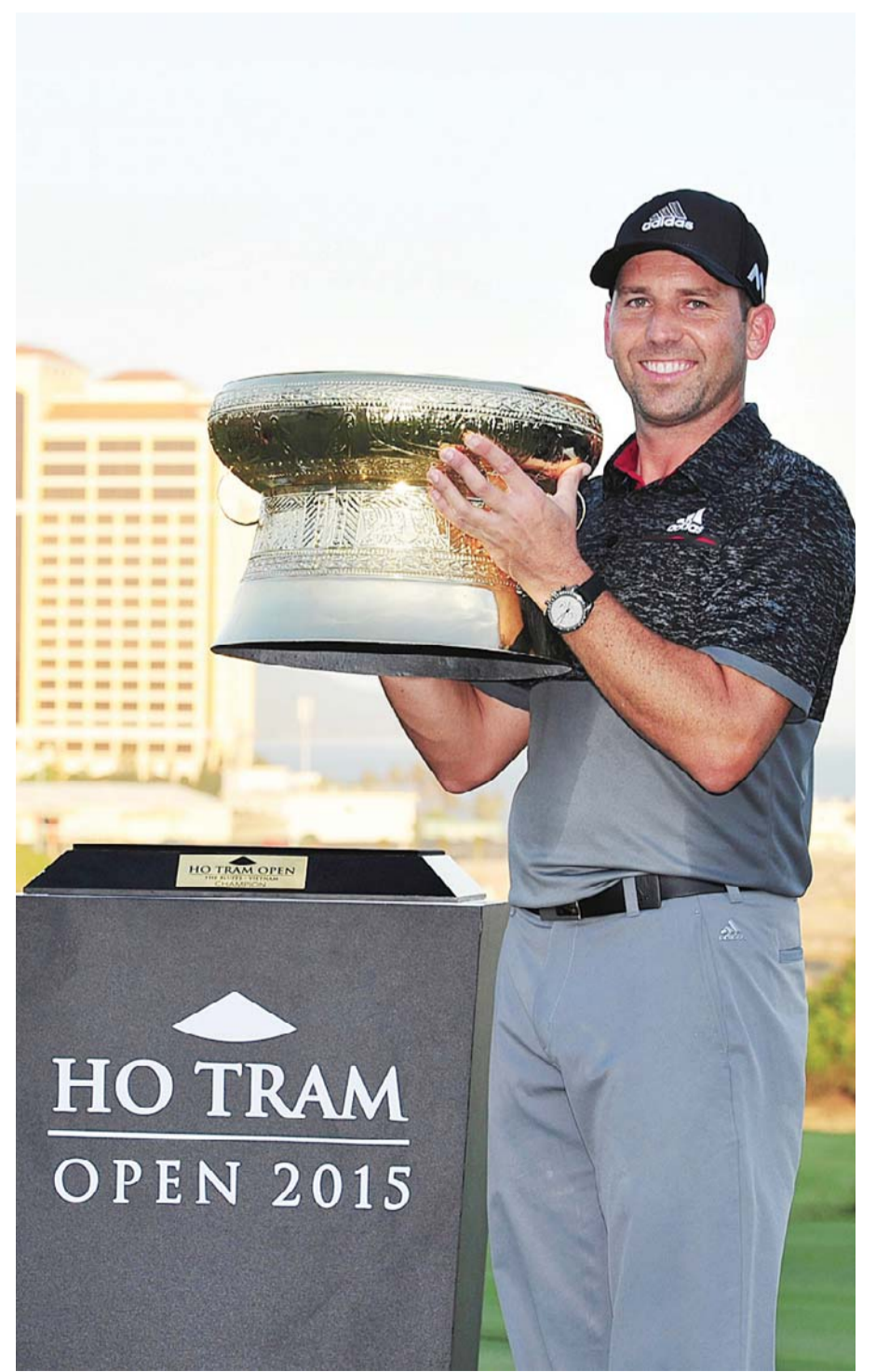
Rai leapfrogged Garcia to snatch a one-stroke lead when he eagled the 16th by holing his pitching wedge from 122 yards only to surrender the lead with a bogey at the 18th but was pleased to have secured his Tour card for next season.

"I enjoyed it because I played really good. On the second play-off hole, I just rushed it," he said.

"I wasn't feeling comfortable with my grip and I should have backed off. I was a little bit disappointed."

Lin also dropped a shot at the 17th that would have given him the win while Thaworn could only par the last three holes.

Denmark's Thomas Bjorn missed out on the playoff by a single shot and finished outright fifth at 13-under when he tarnished his otherwise flawless day with a bogey at the last hole after making eight birdies in a round of 64. — Reuters



**HO TRAM:** Sergio Garcia of Spain poses with the championship trophy after the final round of the Ho Tram Open in Ho Tram, Vietnam. — AFP



## SIDDLE PLAYING FOR HIS TEST SPOT IN HOBART

**HOBART:** Senior paceman Peter Siddle said yesterday he was playing for his place in a rejigged Australian attack at this week's first Test against the West Indies in Hobart.

Siddle has overcome back trouble suffered in Australia's day-night Test win in Adelaide over New Zealand last weekend. Australia need the 58-Test seamer's experience in their pace attack now without leading lights Mitchell Starc (foot) and Mitchell Johnson (retirement) against the West Indies.

But Siddle admitted he had to produce in Hobart to remain in Test contention after being passed over for the first two Tests against the Kiwis.

Siddle claimed his 200th Test wicket in the historic Adelaide day-night Test, but has been in and out of the team over the past 12 months. Australian selectors' new policy to opt for bowlers bowling at speeds of above 140kph (87 mph) have complicated things for Siddle.

West Australian quick Nathan Coulter-Nile was picked in the Test squad for Hobart despite not playing a four-day game since March. "Essentially I am playing for my place," Siddle told reporters. "Being out of the side for so long and having a couple of games here and there makes you feel like that."

"I have to get out there and perform well, get the body right." But the 31-year-old seamer said a chat with Test great Glenn McGrath has convinced him he still has a future despite Australian selectors' new pace policy. Siddle said he had been encouraged by keeping in touch with McGrath, who captured 563 Test wickets despite rarely bowling above the 130kph zone.

Siddle said Adelaide's man of the match Josh Hazlewood had also reminded him that lacking blistering speed was "not a big deal". "Look at his performances. He hasn't got that speed, it's about skill and going on the conditions," he said. "Glenn McGrath is probably the perfect example. He's been our greatest fast bowler and he struggled to touch that (140kph) once in his career."

"That's a good example to go by. I spoke to him a lot, trying to build my game on him, how he was consistent, his patience and being able to work batsmen over." Siddle became the 15th Australian to break the 200 Test wicket barrier in Adelaide.

"It was nice getting a bit of a rest getting back (home) - it was nice finishing the Adelaide Test match early," he said. "But the back is good. It has pulled up well." The first Test starts on Thursday in Hobart. —AFP

## 'PENNILESS' CAIRNS SEEKS ANSWERS AS ACTION LOOMS

**WELLINGTON:** Former New Zealand cricket star Chris Cairns, cleared of perjury charges over match-fixing, demanded answers yesterday for why current captain Brendon McCullum testified against him.

Cairns said years of litigation had left him penniless but he would continue to fight to clear his name, amid reports he would soon face a multi-million dollar fraud claim from Lalit Modi, the founder of the Indian Premier League.

"Beat up, yes. Exhausted, yes. Penniless, yes. Will I continue to fight, absolutely," the 45-year-old Cairns said in a column for Fairfax New Zealand. The former all-rounder questioned why McCullum did not come forward before his 2012 libel trial when he successfully sued Modi who tweeted that Cairns was linked to match-fixing.

Cairns' statement in that hearing that he "never cheated at cricket" formed the basis of the recent perjury trial in which McCullum and former New Zealand batsman Lou Vincent testified they were approached by Cairns to fix matches.

Although a London jury last week found Cairns not guilty of perjury, Modi is now reported to be planning a £1.5 million (US\$2.27 million) fraud claim against him and to have the original libel verdict over-

turned. A civil case requires a lower standard of proof than a criminal trial. "McCullum and Vincent are his key witnesses in his civil case in London," Cairns said.

"Vincent has currently incurred 13 life bans from cricket (one would probably suffice) for his corrupt deeds and, as the jury in my trial was told, he has kept all the cash from his criminal deceit. "The current NZ cricket captain now has to decide if he will support Modi in his upcoming action."

"But there is still a real head-scratcher regarding McCullum. Why didn't he come forward to Modi before my 2012 libel trial? "McCullum had given a statement to the ICC (International Cricket Council) in February 2011 with Dan Vettori present and both men could have helped Modi out then. So, why now?"

During the perjury trial, McCullum said Cairns approached him with a "business proposition" about match fixing. Cairns told the court he had discussed the topic of "spot-fixing" with McCullum in April 2008 in Calcutta and explained spread-betting to him because match-fixing was "topical" in India at the time. Cairns said there was "minimal" time spent discussing match-fixing, and said it was "completely wrong" to suggest spread-betting was the equivalent to match fixing. —AFP



**MANILA:** Australia's Nick Kyrgios of the Singapore Slammers celebrates after a point against Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber of the Japan Warriors during their men's singles match at the International Premier Tennis League (IPTL) in Manila yesterday. — AFP

## BAD BOY KYRGIOS AIMS FOR FIRST GRAND SLAM FINAL

**MANILA:** Tennis's bad boy Nick Kyrgios said yesterday he would pursue his first Grand Slam final next year while maintaining the intensity that has led to frequent brushes with officialdom. The 20-year-old Australian, ranked 30th in the world, said he had "matured a lot" after a turbulent year in which he earned a suspended ban for making a sexual comment about the girlfriend of world number four Stan Wawrinka. "I'm looking to, you know, go really far in a Grand Slam and then almost win one in the next year or two," the right-hander told reporters during the start of the Philippine leg of the International Premier Tennis League tournament.

Kyrgios reached the fourth round in Wimbledon this year, his best Grand Slam result, before losing to Richard Gasquet. He also lost to Andy Murray, the world number two, in the third round of the French Open. Tipped by many experts as a future world number one, Kyrgios picked up his second code violation in two matches in October, earning an \$1,500 fine as he lost to Kei Nishikori at the Shanghai Masters tournament.

The volatile Australian had angrily reacted with vulgar language after being warned for smashing away a loose ball which nearly hit a line judge. If he totals more than \$5,000 in fines before February 24 next year, Kyrgios will have to serve the

suspended ban imposed in August for his comments about Wawrinka's girlfriend.

Kyrgios, Australia's number two men's tennis player, was last month ignored along with fellow controversial star Bernard Tomic, the Australian number one, as nominees for the Newcombe Medal.

It honours Australia's "most outstanding elite tennis player and ambassador". "I had a pretty up and down year, results-wise and then obviously on the court there was some stuff," Kyrgios said Sunday. "But you know, overall I think it was pretty successful." "I think I've matured a lot this year and I've learned a lot and I definitely feel that I've grown as a person and as a tennis player," he added. Asked if this meant he would be less of an angry young man next year, he said:

"You know, I don't think I'm actually very angry at all. I'm actually a calm sort of guy off the court." "But on the court I'm a competitor, you know. I want to win. At the end of the day that's all I want to do." Kyrgios said the edginess was a positive element of his game. "I'll do everything I can, so I think for my game it's good. It brings energy and excitement, and I think that's very important." He said he was now leaner and stronger than previously as he hit the gym more and altered his diet. To get further in the major tournaments he said he had to "put in that body work". —AFP



**NEW DELHI:** South Africa's AB de Villiers (R) plays a shot during the fourth day of the fourth Test cricket match between India and South Africa at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP

# GRITTY S AFRICA DEFY INDIA IN FOURTH TEST

**NEW DELHI:** South Africa fought yesterday to try to save the fourth and final Test after Ajinkya Rahane scored his second century of the match to give India control on the second-last day. Chasing a highly improbable target of 481, South Africa stonewalled the opposition with some defensive batting, scoring at just a run an over on a slow strip at the Feroz Shah Kotla ground in New Delhi. At stumps on the fourth day, the Proteas were 72-2 off 72 overs with skipper Hashim Amla on 23 off 207 balls and AB de Villiers unbeaten on a 91-ball 11.

The top-ranked tourists, who have already lost the series 2-0, will need to bat out three full sessions on Monday to snatch a draw and salvage some pride. A 300-plus target has been chased successfully just once in a Test match on Indian soil by the home team which made 387-4 to defeat England in Chennai in 2008.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, the highest wicket-taker in the series with 28 scalps so far, took 2-29 but the other bowlers were denied any success. Indian fast bowler Umesh Yadav said his team were surprised by the batting tactics.

"They did not even try to go for their shots even when there were balls to be hit," he said. "In such a situation the game becomes boring and taking wickets becomes a challenge. But we have the full day tomorrow, hopefully we will be able to bowl them out."

Amla, who has had a miserable tour, resorted to dead-batting for most of his innings, managing his first run only after facing 46 balls. The usually flamboyant de Villiers, who has the distinction of scoring the fastest ODI century, also curbed his natural attacking instincts.

### 'TIME IS THE KEY'

"We did sit down to discuss the game plan. We decided blocking was the best way forward," said opener Temba Bavuma, who made 34 before losing his off-stump to Ashwin.

"It's not so much the runs, it's the time that's the key. It would be a tough task to bat out 90 overs tomorrow as the wicket is deteriorating. "But we have the experience with batsmen like Amla and de Villiers out there in the middle."

In a low-scoring series where no batsman had previously managed to score a hundred, Rahane hit his second ton of the match to help the hosts declare their second innings on 267-5 half an hour before lunch. He smashed three sixes and eight fours in his unbeaten 100-run knock and shared a 154-run partnership with captain Virat Kohli (88), the highest of the series.

India, who bowled out the Proteas for 121 in their first innings after making 334, have already bagged the series with wins in the first and third Tests. The second Test in Bangalore was washed out after the first day's play. Rahane was in sublime form after the Indians started the day with a commanding lead of 403.

The diminutive right-hander lofted Morne Morkel (3-51) for a six over third man before inflicting similar punishment on spinners Imran Tahir and Elgar and racing into the 90s.

Rahane reached the three-figure mark with a single off Tahir, becoming only the fifth Indian player to score a century in each innings of a Test after Vijay Hazare, Sunil Gavaskar (three times), Rahul Dravid (twice) and Kohli. Kohli was unlucky to miss out on a century Sunday, trapped leg before by fast bowler Kyle Abbott (1-47) in the fifth over of the day after having resumed on his overnight 83.

He struck 10 fours in his patient 165-ball innings. — AFP



Ajinkya Rahane

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day in the fourth and final Test between India and South Africa yesterday in Delhi, India.

<b>India 1st innings 334</b> (A. Rahane 127, R. Ashwin 56; K. Abbott 5-40, D. Pledt 4-117)	Bowling: M. Morkel 21-6-51-3(nb-1), K. Abbott 22-9-47-1, D. Pledt 18-1-53-0, I. Tahir 26-1-4-74-1(nb-1), D. Elgar 13-1-40-0.
<b>South Africa 1st innings 121</b> (R. Jadeja 5-30)	<b>India 2nd innings</b> (Overnight: 40-2)
M. Vijay c Vilas b M. Morkel 3	S. Dhawan b M. Morkel 21
Ro. Sharma b M. Morkel 0	C. Pujara b Tahir 28
V. Kohli lbw b Abbott 88	A. Rahane not out 100
A. Rahane not out 100	W. Saha not out 23
Extras (lb-2 nb-2) 4	Total (for 5 wickets declared, 100.1 overs) 267
Fall of wickets: 1-4 M. Vijay, 2-8 Ro. Sharma, 3-53 S. Dhawan, 4-57 C. Pujara, 5-211 V. Kohli	Did not bat: R. Jadeja, R. Ashwin, U. Yadav, I. Sharma
	<b>South Africa 2nd innings</b> (Target: 481 runs)
	D. Elgar c Rahane b Ashwin 4
	T. Bavuma b Ashwin 34
	H. Amla not out 23
	A. de Villiers not out 11
	Extras 0
	Total (for 2 wickets, 72 overs) 72
	Fall of wickets: 1-5 D. Elgar, 2-49 T. Bavuma
	Did not bat: F. du Plessis, J. Duminy, D. Vilas, D. Pledt, K. Abbott, M. Morkel, I. Tahir.
	Bowling: I. Sharma 12-7-16-0, R. Ashwin 23-13-29-2, R. Jadeja 23-16-10-0, U. Yadav 9-6-6-0, S. Dhawan 3-1-9-0, M. Vijay 2-0-2-0.



## TOYOTA PRIUS STAMPS ITS AUTHORITY BY WINNING ROUND 8 OF 2015

**TOCHIGI PREFECTURE:** The No. 31 TOYOTA PRIUS apr GT car driven by Koki Saga and Yuichi Nakayama won round 8 of the 2015 AUTOBACS SUPER GT 300 series, which was held recently at the Twin Ring Motegi in Tochigi Prefecture. The final round took place in tricky conditions with the track wet in the early stages and dry in the latter half.

The race began with all the cars starting on rain tires due to the wet conditions. The pole-sitting No. 31 TOYOTA PRIUS apr GT driven by Koki Saga had a good start to keep the lead and then began pulling away from the

pack. Running in the lead, the No. 31 car was turning out laps as fast as 1'55", while the cars from the second place down were running at a pace of about 2'00" flat. By just the tenth lap of the race, car No. 31 had built up a lead of more than 25 seconds, and that lead continued to grow with each lap. However, the No. 31 car fell behind by the 30th lap to remain in fourth place because of a collision between two cars which brought out the Safety Car, hence, the No. 31 car lost its chance to make its routine pit stop.

By this time, the weather had changed

with the rain stopping so all the cars proceeded to race on slick tires on a dry track. With Yuichi Nakayama at the helm, the No. 31 car started to accelerate and make its way back into the lead. On the 37th lap, he clocked the fastest lap of the race with a 1'49.434 time and then went on to retake the lead on the 38th lap and then eventually win the race. This win was the second of the season for the No. 31 team, following the win at Okayama.

"This was a wonderful win for the team and highlights the superb performance and

versatility of the Prius," said Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, TOYOTA Motor Corporation. "For most of our history, we have pushed our cars to their limits in order to improve our products and this is why our involvement in motorsports is very important in learning more about the capabilities of our vehicles. For Toyota, motorsports activities are a central pillar for creating ever-better cars. We also appreciate the support of our fans and their constant encouragement for our racing initiatives."

Speaking on the occasion, Yuichi Nakayama, said, "We got two wins this season, in the opening round and the final round, so I am very glad about the way things have gone. Unfortunately due to a mid-race collision, the Safety Car had to come out resulting in us losing the lead. When I got back into the race we were in fourth position, and I was informed over the team radio that the lead car was eight seconds ahead of me. I was a little concerned about the performance of the slick tires but I was able to catch up, so it was a great race in the end."



**TORONTO:** Stephen Curry #30 of the Golden State Warriors dribbles around Patrick Patterson #54 of the Toronto Raptors during an NBA game at the Air Canada Centre on Saturday in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. — AFP

## ROAD WARRIORS HOLD ON TO EXTEND WINNING STREAK TO 25

**LOS ANGELES:** The undefeated Golden State Warriors survived a late scare before stretching their winning streak to 25 consecutive games with a 112-109 victory against the Toronto Raptors on Saturday. Reigning NBA MVP Stephen Curry scored 15 of his game-high 44 points in the fourth quarter for the Warriors, who are off to a 21-0 start to the season, including 11-0 on the road. "We expect teams to fight and come back when we are on the road and that is what they did," said Curry. "We made some shots, got a few stops along the way and pulled it out." The Warriors have won 25 straight regular season games dating back to last season. Their streak started with a 116-105 win over Portland in April. The Raptors trailed by as many as 13 points in the first quarter and by 10 points at halftime. Toronto took the lead at 85-84 in the final quarter. Toronto led 98-95 when their forward Luis Scola made two free throws with just over four minutes to play in the fourth, but Curry tied it with a three-pointer. Curry made two free throws with 18 seconds remaining for a 108-105 Warriors lead. Kyle Lowry cut the margin to one point with a basket before Warriors guard Klay Thompson made a pair of free throws with seven seconds to play. The lead was down to one when Scola made two free throws with 6.2 seconds left. Curry made both his free throws and Toronto's Cory Joseph turned over the ball with three seconds to play as it rolled out of bounds into the hands of rapper and Raptor fan Drake, who was sitting courtside.

### HEAT 99, CAVALIERS 84

Dwyane Wade and Tyler Johnson scored 19 points apiece, and Miami took advantage of Cleveland's decision to hold out LeBron James. Goran Dragic scored 17 points, Chris Bosh added 14 and Gerald Green had 12 for the Heat, who held Cleveland to 36 percent shooting and sent the Cavaliers to their third straight loss. Richard Jefferson started in place of James and led Cleveland with 16 points. James was given the night off to rest, the first game he has missed for the Cavaliers this season. Heat fans serenaded him with a "LeBron is tired" chant in the fourth quarter.

### SPURS 108, CELTICS 105

LaMarcus Aldridge scored 17 points, and San Antonio improved to 11 0 at home. Boris Diaw scored 16 points for the Spurs, and Kawhi Leonard and Manu Ginobili each had 15. Isaiah

Thomas had 23 points for the Celtics. Amir Johnson finished with 11 points and 11 rebounds. Boston missed its last chance when it threw the ball out of bounds on an attempted full-court inbound pass to Jared Sullinger.

### CLIPPERS 103, MAGIC 101

Jamal Crawford scored 16 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter, helping the Clippers stop the Magic's five-game winning streak. Blake Griffin had 28 points and 13 rebounds for Los Angeles, and reserve Wesley Johnson scored 21 points. The Clippers played without injured guards Chris Paul and J.J. Redick. Reserve Victor Oladipo scored a season-high 24 points and Elfrid Payton added 21 points for the Magic, who blew all of a 12-point lead early in the fourth. That's when the Clippers got three straight 3-pointers, one by Johnson and two by Crawford, as part of a 22-7 run that gave them a 99-96 lead.

### JAZZ 122, PACERS 119, OT

Derrick Favors scored a career-high 35 points, and Utah rallied for the win. Favors converted a three-point play to help send the game to overtime, and then added six more points in the extra period. Favors had a layup off a pick-and-roll with Trey Burke with 17.1 seconds left, and George Hill missed a potential tying 3-pointer at the buzzer. Indiana wasted career-high 48 points from Paul George, who carried the offensive load for much of the night. But two missed jumpers down the stretch of regulation helped Utah come back. Favors also grabbed 13 rebounds, and Gordon Hayward had 22 points, five rebounds and five assists.

### HORNETS 102, BULLS 96

Nicolas Batum scored 12 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter, leading Charlotte to the win. Cody Zeller and Kemba Walker had 17 points apiece for the Hornets, who played their first road game since Nov. 17 in New York. Spencer Hawes added 14 points and Batum also grabbed 11 rebounds. Jimmy Butler scored 25 points and Derrick Rose had 19 for the Bulls, who fell to 7-2 at the United Center. Pau Gasol scored 13 points in his 1,000th career regular-season game. Chicago and Charlotte were tied at 94 before Zeller made two free throws and Walker hit a jumper with 28.9 seconds remaining.

### ROCKETS 120, KINGS 113

James Harden scored 31 points, Dwight

Howard had 22 and Houston beat Sacramento for its third straight win. Harden made a 3-point-er with about 90 seconds left to make it 115-109 and seal the win. DeMarcus Cousins, who missed the first meeting with the Rockets because of an injury, was hampered by foul trouble and finished with 14 points and nine rebounds. He fouled out with a little over two minutes left. Ben McLemore scored 19 for the Kings. Houston has won seven in a row against Sacramento.

### NUGGETS 108, 76ERS 105

Danilo Gallinari scored 24 points for Denver, including the go-ahead slam dunk with under a minute remaining. Will Barton added 16 points for the Nuggets, who ended a five-game road trip by winning their second straight after snapping an eight-game skid on Thursday. Robert Covington scored 18 points and Isaiah Canaan had 15 for Philadelphia, which dropped to 1-20. Philadelphia rookie Jahliil Okafor sat out the second of a two-game suspension imposed by the team on Wednesday after the release of a second video from a nightclub fight in Boston on Nov. 25.

### BUCKS 106, KNICKS 91

Michael Carter-Williams had 20 points, and the Bucks used a 21-4 run in the third quarter to pull away for the win. Jabari Parker added 17 points, including a dunk and a jumper during the decisive spurt that pushed Milwaukee to a double-digit lead. The Knicks trailed by 21 with 7:04 left in the third quarter when coach Derek Fisher replaced his entire starting five following a technical foul on Jose Calderon at the end of the run. The fresh lineup settled the team, though New York could get no closer than nine the rest of the night. Carmelo Anthony scored 18 points for the Knicks.

### TRAIL BLAZERS 109, TIMBERWOLVES 103

Damian Lillard overcame a slow start to finish with 19 points and seven assists, and the Trail Blazers rallied from 17 points down in the third quarter to beat the Timberwolves. C.J. McCollum added 17 points for Portland. Lillard missed nine of his first 12 shots. But his driving layup with 18.8 seconds left helped hold off a charge from the Timberwolves, who also gave up a 17-point lead to the Blazers in their home opener on Nov. 2 Karl-Anthony Towns had 27 points and 12 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who fell to 2-8 at home this season. — AP

## NYQUIST SCORES IN OT AS RED WINGS BEAT PREDATORS

**DETROIT:** Gustav Nyquist scored 1:41 into overtime and the Detroit Red Wings overcame a pair of two-goal deficits to beat the Nashville Predators 5-4 on Saturday night. Shea Weber had a hat trick and put Nashville up 4-2 with his third score 8:03 into the third period. Dylan Larkin scored for Detroit about a minute later, and then Justin Abdelkader tied it with a power-play goal with 2:23 left. Brad Richards and Tomas Tatar scored the Red Wings' other goals. Nyquist, Larkin and Tatar also had an assist each.

### SENATORS 3, ISLANDERS 2, OT

Erik Karlsson scored in overtime to finish off Ottawa's comeback from two goals down in the third period. Karlsson finished off a cross-ice pass from Bobby Ryan at 3:34 of the extra period after Mike Hoffman forced overtime with 37 seconds left in regulation. Mark Stone also scored for the Senators, while Karlsson also had two assists. Craig Anderson made 29 saves. Matt Martin and Josh Bailey gave the Islanders a 2-0 lead before Ottawa stormed back. Jaroslav Halak stopped 26 shots. New York snapped a four-game winning streak, but recorded a point for the seventh straight game (5-0-2).

### BRUINS 4, CANUCKS 0

Tukka Rask stopped 17 shots for his third shutout of the season and the 29th of his career to lead Boston. Landon Ferraro had a goal and an assist, and Brad Marchand, Torey Krug and Tyler Randell also scored for the Bruins. Boston, coming off a 5-4 overtime loss at Calgary on Friday, was for the third time in four nights. Rask, the backup to Tim Thomas when Boston beat Vancouver in the 2011 Stanley Cup final, picked up his first victory at Rogers Arena after giving up four goals in each of the Bruins' last two visits. Jacob Markstrom finished with 18 stops for the Canucks, who have lost five straight and 13 of their last 16.

### KINGS 5, PENGUINS 3

Jake Muzzin had a goal and two assists during Los Angeles' four-goal second period and the Kings won their third consecutive game. Milan Lucic scored twice in the Kings' fifth straight home win. Drew Doughty and Christian Ehrhoff also scored for the first-place Kings. Jonathan Quick made 17 saves to beat Pittsburgh for just the second time in his career, and the Kings scored five goals in a game for the first time this season. Chris Kunitz had a goal and two assists for Pittsburgh, and the Penguins lost in regulation for just the second time in eight games. Sidney Crosby had a third-period goal and an assist, and Olli Maatta scored in his return from a six-game injury absence. Two of the NHL's best defensive teams yielded six combined goals in a wild second period, with Muzzin matching his career high in points over a 10-minute span.

### WILD 3, AVALANCHE 0

Darcy Kuemper stopped all nine shots he faced in relief of injured Devan Dubnyk and Minnesota beat Colorado. Dubnyk left a scoreless game with a lower-body injury midway through the second period after making 11 saves. Kuemper kept the shutout intact to earn his first win of the season. Matt Dumba opened the scoring on a big slap shot with 6:33 left in the second period, then Justin Fontane and Jason Pominville scored in the third. Dubnyk

sparked Minnesota to a playoff berth last year and is fourth among all goaltenders in minutes played this season. Neither Wild goalie was challenged much. Minnesota controlled play and outshot Colorado 44-20, and Semyon Varlamov made a season-high 41 saves for the Avalanche.

### JETS 2, CAPITALS 1, OT

Mark Scheifele scored with 20 seconds left in overtime to end Washington's season-high six-game winning streak. Scheifele got his goal after Jacob Trouba cycled down low with the puck. Trouba passed to Scheifele in the left face-off circle, and Scheifele fired by Braden Holtby glove side. Jets rookie Connor Hellebuyck made 37 saves in his third NHL game to remain undefeated. Captain Andrew Ladd scored on the power play for Winnipeg. Nicklas Backstrom also scored with the man advantage for Washington.

### HURRICANES 3, CANADIENS 2

Jeff Skinner's second goal of the game late in the third period lifted Carolina over Montreal. Joakim Nordstrom also scored and Cam Ward stopped 36 shots for Carolina. Daniel Carr and Sven Andrighetto had goals for Montreal, and Mike Condon finished with 26 saves. The Canadiens, currently the runaway leaders in the Eastern Conference, won all three meetings last season. Skinner deflected Brett Pescese's shot into the net for a power-play goal with 7:32 remaining to break the 2-2 tie. Nordstrom had tied it with 6:45 left in the second as he knocked in the rebound of Andrej Nestrasil's shot past Condon stick side.

### BLUE JACKETS 4, FLYERS 1

Nick Foligno scored twice, Scott Hartnell had a goal and two assists and Columbus beat Philadelphia. Jack Johnson also scored for Columbus, which ended a three-game losing streak. Philadelphia had won four in a row. Michael Raffl scored for the Flyers, and Steve Mason made 30 saves. Both teams were playing for the second straight night.

### MAPLE LEAFS 4, BLUES 1

Nazem Kadri scored twice and Roman Polak had two assists to lead Toronto past his former team. Brad Boyes and P.A. Parenteau also scored for Toronto, which had lost two straight and five of six. Garret Sparks stopped 27 shots for his second career victory. Vladimir Tarasenko scored his 15th goal of the season for St. Louis, while Jake Allen made 25 saves. The Blues fell to 4-5-3 over their past 12 games after starting the season 11-3-1.

### LIGHTNING 4, SHARKS 3

Nikita Kucherov scored twice to lead Tampa Bay to its fifth win in seven games. Erik Condra and Brian Boyle also scored for the Lightning. Ben Bishop, who stopped 24 of 26 shots en route to his fifth win in six starts, left the ice with 11:10 remaining to play after taking a stick to the face. Andrei Vasilevskiy saved six of eight shots he faced. The win came a day after Lightning coach Jon Cooper signed a multi-year contract extension. Matt Tennyson, Joel Ward and Brett Burns each scored a power-play goal for the Sharks, who continue to struggle at home. They've lost five of six and fell to 4-8 on their home ice. Alex Stalock finished with 16 saves. — AP



**ST PAUL:** Colorado Avalanche goalie Semyon Varlamov (1), of Russia, watches the puck as Minnesota Wild center Ryan Carter (18) chases it during the first period of an NHL hockey game in St. Paul, Minn., Saturday. — AP

## Soccer Schools: China's Play for World Cup Glory

**HONG KONG/SHANGHAI:** Wang Shijie, 11, is a rising star among the nearly 3,000 students at Guangzhou Evergrande's huge soccer academy in south China. He wants to join the national team and help achieve President Xi Jinping's dream of winning the World Cup.

In schools like this around the country, China is training an army of young players it hopes will help the nation shake off its lowly place in the world's football ladder: 84th out of 209 countries, just above Qatar and below teams like Jordan, Montenegro and Gabon.

"When I join the national team, I will do my best to help China become World Cup champions," Wang, wearing golden-colored boots and a yellow jersey, told Reuters during a break in training at the school that has 50 full-size pitches and coaches flown in from European giant Real Madrid.

Led by Xi, an avid fan, China has clearly made it a goal to become a soccer superpower. A consortium led by state-backed China Media Capital took a \$400 million stake last week in the owner of English Premier League champions

Manchester City - Beijing's biggest investment in the sport overseas.

The tie-up will help Abu Dhabi-owned City tap the fast-growing sports and entertainment market in the world's most populous nation, and at the same time give China international soccer knowhow, on the field and off.

"The Chinese government wanted to make a statement," said Alexander Jarvis, chairman of Blackbridge Cross Borders, which brokers deals between Chinese investors and European teams.

Jarvis said he was currently working on six deals with Chinese firms looking to buy into clubs in Europe - including in England, Germany and Spain - and that there would be even bigger Chinese investment in 2016, usually with a China-based soccer school or training base thrown in.

"Pretty much every football club which has some type of deal with the Chinese will have an academy. It's very much Xi's long-term dream of World Cup glory, and building the infrastructure on the ground is exactly what they want."

Guangzhou Evergrande, coached by World Cup-winning Brazilian Luiz Felipe

Scolari, are current Asian club champions but China's national team has a long way to go to World Cup glory. Even in Asia, fierce rivals Japan and South Korea have a far stronger reputation in the game.

The only time China qualified for the finals of the World Cup was in 2002, when the tournament was jointly hosted by South Korea and Japan. China was dismissed at the group stage without scoring a goal and conceding nine.

Its hopes of qualifying for the 2018 finals have been dealt a blow after a goalless draw with tiny Hong Kong last month.

There is no evidence that investing in football clubs overseas has contributed to any Asian soccer team's prowess. Businessmen from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India and China all have stakes in European clubs.

### AMBITIOUS GOALS

But if the investments help improve China's soccer infrastructure, it could lead the way to a successful bid to host the World Cup finals, sports executives say. The home nation automatically

qualifies for the tournament. For the clubs, China is a huge, still untapped market for fans, merchandise sales and TV audiences.

The country aims to grow its sports market to 5 trillion yuan (\$782 billion) by 2025, around a five-fold leap from its current size, and football will play a big part. That's good news for franchises tapping into local media distribution rights, sponsorship and merchandising. It's also a boon for sports-focused companies such as adidas AG and Nike Inc.

"The willingness to pay for sports isn't limited to watching them; membership at sports clubs is up, as is the amount people are willing to spend on sporting equipment," said Liu Yue, a former national football player and now a commentator.

Increasingly, the way into China's football market is made easier by promoting the local game.

Germany's adidas and former Brazil star Ronaldo have launched football academies and England's David Beckham is an "ambassador" for Chinese football.

Premier League and other European

clubs regularly visit China in their summer off-season, drawing huge crowds.

Chinese authorities are squarely behind the drive to develop local football, providing the vital political support to the move. Local governments have helped subsidise television licence fees to support local teams, while the recent Manchester City deal was led by a state-backed firm.

Xi himself visited City's academy last month during a trip to Britain, where he posed for a selfie with Argentinian striker Sergio Aguero and British Prime Minister David Cameron.

However, corruption and player quality remain serious hurdles in Chinese football. A crackdown to clean up the game has seen at least nine officials, four judges, 13 footballers or coaches and 17 club workers jailed or punished since 2009.

"A short-term goal for China is to gain a leading role in Asia," said Fernando Sanchez Cipitria, technical director at the academy in Guangdong and a former player for Real Madrid. "For China to win the World Cup it could be a long journey." — Reuters

## Lyon Beaten 2-0 in Final League Match

**LYON:** Lyon bid a disappointing farewell to its famous stadium as it lost 2-0 to Angers in its last Ligue 1 match at the Stade Gerland on Saturday. More than a 100 former Lyon players were present at the Stade Gerland - which has been Lyon's home since the club was founded in 1950.

The players on the pitch were booed off by their own fans after a dismal performance. The last competitive match at the Gerland will be on Dec. 16, against Tours in the league cup.

Cheikh N'Doye scored in each half for Angers and, apart from a brief period during which Mathieu Valbuena hit the bar and Alexandre Lacazette had a goal ruled out for offside, Lyon rarely threatened.

Angers moved second, 15 points behind runaway leader Paris Saint-Germain and a point above Caen, which lost 2-1 against struggling Lille.

It was Lille's second successive win, after having not won in two months prior to its surprise victory over Saint-Etienne midweek. Lille leapt out of the relegation zone and into 12th spot, ahead of the rest of the weekend's games.

Lyon, winless in five matches in all competition, slipped to fifth after Monaco won 2-1 at Bastia, thanks to a double from Lacin Traore. "The strength of great teams is their ability to react and today we're not a great team," Valbuena said. "We're having catastrophic performances and even today there wasn't really much reaction. We're at our lowest."

Lyon coach Hurbert Fournier said he is not planning on quitting, while club president Jean-Michel Aulas assured he will lead the team at least for the next two matches - against Valencia in the Champions League and at PSG next Sunday.

Bastia slipped into the bottom three, below safety on goal difference. It is

three points above

Toulouse, which lost 3-2 at home to Lorient. Bottom club Troyes picked up its second point in nine matches with a 1-1 draw at Reims, but is nevertheless 12 points from safety.

Ajaccio drew 1-1 with Nantes. Lyon was trying to end a four-match run without a victory. However, it was Angers which took the lead in the 17th minute when Thomas Mangani lofted a free kick toward the far post and N'Doye rose above the Lyon defense to head powerfully into the right side of the net. The Angers captain almost doubled his tally six minutes from halftime but his header from Gilles Sunu's free kick went just past the left post.

Lyon seemed reinvigorated after the break and Valbuena hit the bar nine minutes into the second half. Lacazette also went close, as well as having an effort ruled out when he and a teammate were clearly offside on Clement Grenier's pass.

Angers weathered the storm and all but sealed the match nine minutes from time when N'Doye headed Billy Ketkeophomphone's corner into the bottom right corner. Caen could have moved back into second but Lille secured a first away victory of the season thanks to Yassine Benzia's double. Benzia opened the scoring in the 28th, finishing off a swift counterattack by rounding Caen goalkeeper Remy Vercoutre and slotting into an empty net.

Caen defender Damien Da Silva also cleared Renato Civelli's header off the line, while Lille could have been awarded a penalty too for a handball by Alaeddine Yahia at the end of the first half. Lille did get a second shortly before the hour when Vercoutre could only push Sofiane Boufal's lob into the path of Benzia, who fired under the bar. Caen set up a nervy final 20 minutes as Andy Delort converted from the penalty spot after Djibril Sidibe hauled down Herve Bazile in the area. — AP



**FROSINONE:** Frosinone's Luca Paganini, left, vies for the ball with Chievo Verona's Alessandro Gamberini during a Serie A soccer match in Frosinone, Italy, yesterday. Chievo won 2-0. — AP

## Van Gaal Baffled by Fans' Criticism of Dour United

**MANCHESTER:** Louis van Gaal insists he still has the support of Manchester United's frustrated fans despite claiming he can't understand their plea for more attacking football during a dour 0-0 draw against West Ham.

United's failure to score for the fifth time at Old Trafford this season means four of their last six home games have finished in goalless draws. Van Gaal's team, without injured top scorer Wayne Rooney, were guilty of poor finishing against a West Ham side who arguably had the better chances to have won for the first time in five Premier League matches. Not for the first time this season, disgruntled United supporters chanted "attack, attack, attack" during the game and booed van Gaal's side off at the end as they remained unbeaten at home this season but slipped to fourth in the Premier League.

Yet, asked about the mounting criticism of his conservative tactics, United boss van Gaal said: "I don't understand that they are shouting 'attack, attack' because we are the attacking team and not West Ham. "That is not only today but in every game it's like that because we are always more dominating than our opponents."

"When they don't like the style of play for Manchester United everybody knows it didn't fit. All the teams of mine are playing like that. "When I have been in Barcelona or Bayern Munchen or AZ (Alkmaar), we have played like that."

"But I think when I meet the fans on the streets or wherever, they are very happy with Manchester United and with me, but you have to score. "And when you don't score, then it lets points go. Because of that now we are three points behind Leicester City because we don't score one goal today and that is the difference."

### MOMENT OF MADNESS

Van Gaal admitted that he may need to add another striker to his squad, but he claimed that even a player of the quality of Manchester City's Sergio Aguero or Barcelona's Luis Suarez would not be guaranteed to score. The United manager, whose side will have to score to get the win they need at Wolfsburg on Tuesday to progress in the Champions League, added: "There is always a question mark but I'm pleased with the performance. "When you create these kind of chances you have to finish. But you can't say we played badly."

"The most important aspect of football we didn't do. My opinion about scoring goals is not only about composure but also a lot of luck. "I am not so worried but we have to pass over this period because it is too long that we don't score."

Meanwhile, West Ham manager Slaven Bilic claimed United midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger should have been sent off for what he said was an elbow to defender Winston Reid in an off-the-ball incident just before half time. "It is a moment of

madness, he deserved to be sent off. But the referee told me he didn't see it, which is fair enough. I believe it," Bilic said. West Ham twice hit the post and had one-on-one chances for both Victor Moses and Mauro Zayate as they threatened to add a victory at Old Trafford to the away wins they have enjoyed at Liverpool, Arsenal and Manchester City

this season.

"They had chances of course but we deserved a point. I have nothing but praise for my players. They did magnificently," Bilic said. "It is not very common for West Ham to come here and take something at Manchester United. It is a good day, especially with a clean sheet." — AFP

## Marseille Fights Back for Draw Against Montpellier

**MARSEILLE:** Marseille twice came back to secure a 2-2 draw at home to Montpellier in Ligue 1 yesterday, while Bordeaux recorded a crucial 1-0 win against fellow struggler Guingamp.

Montpellier top scorer Casimir N'Ginga notched his second double in three matches to twice put his side ahead. The 22-year-old scored his first following a one-two with Ryad Boudebouz and doubled his tally with an effort that went in off the left post.

Remy Cabella, who progressed through the ranks at Montpellier and spent five years in the first team, starred against his old side and netted the first equalizer, although the ball appeared to come off his arm in the buildup.

Bouna Sarr fired in Marseille's second after the officials did not spot that the ball had

gone out of play before Georges-Kevin Nkoudou's cross. It was Marseille's sixth home match without a win and left it ninth although Michel's side will be overtaken if Rennes wins at Saint-Etienne later.

Montpellier moved a point above the bottom three, above Guingamp on goal difference, but was leapfrogged by Bordeaux which is up to 12th, three points above the drop zone in a tight bottom half of the table.

Both Bordeaux and Guingamp were hoping to avoid a third consecutive defeat but the home side, which was booed off the pitch at halftime by its fans, managed to break the deadlock on the hour mark when Cedric Yambere headed in Wahbi Khazri's corner. Guingamp almost leveled 12 minutes later as Nicolas Benezet's effort crashed off the left upright. — AP



**BORDEAUX:** Guingamp's Belgian forward Nill de Pau (top) falls over Bordeaux German defender Diego Contento during the French Ligue 1 football match between Bordeaux and Caen yesterday at the Matmut Atlantique stadium in Bordeaux, southwestern France. — AP

### Spanish League results/standings

Spanish League results/standings															
Real Sociedad 2, Eibar 1; Saturday, December 5; Deportivo Coruna 1, Sevilla 1; Granada CF 0, Atletico Madrid 2; Real Betis 1, Celta Vigo 1; Real Madrid 4, Getafe 1; Valencia 1, Barcelona 1.															
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Sociedad	14	11	1	2	34	13	34	Real Betis	14	5	4	5	13	18	19
Barcelona	14	11	1	2	34	13	34	Espanyol	13	5	1	7	14	24	16
Atletico 14	10	2	2	20	6	32		Real Sociedad	14	4	3	7	16	19	15
Real Madrid	14	9	3	2	32	12	30	Getafe	14	4	2	8	15	23	14
Celta Vigo	14	7	4	3	25	22	25	Rayo Vallecano	13	4	2	7	14	23	14
Deportivo	14	5	7	2	21	14	22	Sporting Gijon	13	3	3	7	12	20	12
Villarreal	13	6	3	4	16	14	21	Granada CF	14	2	5	7	15	24	11
Valencia	14	5	5	4	18	11	20	Malaga	13	2	4	7	7	13	10
Club	13	6	2	5	21	16	20	Las Palmas	13	2	4	7	10	19	10
Eibar	14	5	5	4	18	16	20	Levante	13	2	4	7	10	24	10
Sevilla	14	5	4	5	19	19	19								

## Agirretxe's Brace Gives Sociedad 2-1 Win Over Eibar

**BARCELONA:** Real Sociedad striker Imanol Agirretxe scored his second goal in the 90th minute for a 2-1 comeback victory over Eibar in yesterday's Basque Country derby in the Spanish league.

Agirretxe tapped in the late winner after substitute Bruma used his thigh to knock on Esteban Granero's lobbed pass. Agirretxe's first goal at Anoeta Stadium came in the 10th to cancel out Borja "Baston" Gonzalez's early opener. The goals were his 10th and 11th of the season, making him the league's third-leading scorer. Only Barcelona pair Neymar (14) and Luis Suarez (13) have scored more in the competition through 14 rounds.

After failing to win at home this season under former coach David Moyes, Sociedad's second win in three rounds under new manager Eusebio Sacristan lifted it into 13th place, five points above

the relegation zone. Eibar stayed ninth.

"We are happy because it was very important to get our second win at home after our poor start to the season," Agirretxe said. "We have started to move away from the bottom and now can look toward the top."

Eibar started strongly and Baston netted his team-high seventh goal of the campaign in the fourth minute from Sergi Enrich's pass. But Agirretxe soon equalized when Sergio Canales raced down the left flank and sent in a cross that Eibar defender Aleksandar Pantic couldn't successfully clear and Agirretxe fired in. Later, Villarreal hosts Rayo Vallecano, Athletic Bilbao welcomes Malaga, and Las Palmas visits Sporting Gijon. Leader Barcelona drew 1-1 at Valencia on Saturday, allowing second-place Atletico Madrid and third-place Real Madrid to close the gap with victories. — AP

## Sports

Camel race held  
at Kuwait Camel  
Race ClubToyota Prius  
wins round 8  
of 2015

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015

SOCCER SCHOOLS: CHINA'S PLAY FOR WORLD CUP GLORY

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NEWCASTLE: Newcastle United's GeorGINO Wijnaldum, left, vies for the ball with Liverpool's captain James Milner, right, during the English Premier League soccer match between Newcastle United and Liverpool at St James' Park, Newcastle, England, yesterday. — AP

## WIJNALDUM, NEWCASTLE HALT LIVERPOOL SURGE



**NEWCASTLE:** Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool resurgence ran aground yesterday as GeorGINO Wijnaldum inspired Newcastle United to a much-needed 2-0 home win that eased the pressure on their manager Steve McClaren.

Liverpool went into the game chasing an eighth win in nine games, which would have taken them to within three points of the Champions League places, but Wijnaldum

forced an own goal by Martin Skrtel and scored himself to leave them six points adrift of the top four in seventh place.

It was only the second defeat of Klopp's 12-game tenure, but with Liverpool only mustering a single shot on target, it will douse some of the excitement created by their recent surge, which has seen them anointed potential champions in certain quarters.

McClaren has only been able to envy the headlines created by Klopp in recent weeks, but Monday's newspapers will make far more pleasant reading for the ex-England manager following recent heavy losses to Leicester City and Crystal Palace.

While Newcastle remain in the relegation zone, their third win of the campaign means they are now level on points with both Norwich City and Bournemouth. Divock Origi and Daniel

Sturridge had scored five of the six goals that Liverpool put past Southampton in the League Cup on Wednesday, but both dropped to the bench as Klopp made six changes.

Befitting a team chasing a fifth successive victory, Liverpool made an enterprising start, winning two corners in the first 70 seconds and forcing Newcastle back through the running of Nathaniel Clyne and Jordan Ibe on the right flank. But for all their endeavour, there was little penetration and when Liverpool did procure a chance in the 21st minute, Dejan Lovren nodding Alberto Moreno's corner down for Christian Benteke, the burly Belgian contrived to jab the ball over the bar from three yards.

It was a poor miss and as the half wore on Newcastle gained a foothold, hunting their opponents down in packs and looking the more likely team to score.

## STURRIDGE CHANCE

Moreno had to produce an airborne challenge to thwart Siem de Jong, who replaced Ayoze Perez in the only change to the team thrashed 5-1 at Palace, while Papiss Cisse squandered an opportunity to run at Skrtel, allowing the Slovakian to dispossess him.

Shortly before half-time, Jack Colback's corner from the right was flicked on by Cisse at the near post, but Chancel Mbemba could not keep his header down.

Newcastle continued to carry the greater threat after the break, Wijnaldum shooting wide from Moussa Sissoko's pass, and with half an hour remaining Klopp took action by sending on Sturridge and Adam Lallana for Benteke and Roberto Firmino.

McClaren countered by introducing Perez for De Jong in the 67th minute and two minutes lat-

er, his side were in front. Sissoko's cross from the right struck Wijnaldum on the thigh, but the Holland midfielder gathered the ball and worked space for a shot that the sliding Skrtel deflected past Simon Mignolet for an own goal.

Klopp threw on Origi for Ibe, realigning the strike-force that had torpedoed Southampton, but they could not reverse the visitors' fate.

Sturridge skewed a shot badly wide from Lallana's slide-rule pass, while Moreno saw a deft lobbed volley from James Milner's raking pass ruled out in a marginal offside call.

When Liverpool finally found the target in the 89th minute, Lovren heading down Moreno's left-wing cross, it was straight at Newcastle goalkeeper Rob Elliot.

Fittingly, Wijnaldum had the final say, running onto Sissoko's pass in stoppage time and liting a delightful shot over Mignolet. — AFP

## DESTRO STUNS NAPOLI, VIOLA UP TO SECOND

**MILAN:** Mattia Destro hit a brace in a 3-2 win as Bologna dented Napoli's Serie A title hopes, while Fiorentina moved up to second behind leaders Inter with a 2-0 win over Udinese. Napoli travelled to the Dall'Ara stadium expecting to maintain a long unbeaten run that has seen Maurizio Sarri's men become bona fide challengers to defending champions Juventus.

But the Azzurri struggled to recover after going 2-0 down before the half-hour as Luca Rossetini added to Destro's 14th-minute opener. Destro hit his second on the hour and although Gonzalo Higuain hit a last-gasp brace to set up a tense finale, the hosts hung on for just their fifth win of the season to move two points clear of the drop zone. "Before the game I told the lads not to think too much about Napoli, they have top players but it was important to focus on our strengths, to press them, attack and try to put them in difficulty," said Bologna coach Roberto Donadoni, a former Napoli coach. "The lads were incredible, they went out and did exactly what we had planned to do."

Napoli had gone top of the pile for the first time in 25 years last week with a 2-1 win over Inter Milan.

But after Inter reclaimed first place with a 1-0 win against Genoa on Saturday, Sarri's men are now two points adrift in third after seeing Fiorentina maintain their push for honours this season. Fiorentina moved up to second place at just one point behind after goals from Milan Badelj, Josip Ilicic, from the spot, and Gonzalo Rodriguez five minutes from the whistle secured a 3-0 home win over Udinese at a packed Artemio Franchi stadium.

Roma, held 1-1 at Torino on Saturday when Maxi Lopez hit a last-gasp penalty to level Miralem Pjanic's superb free kick, remain in fourth at five points behind. Juventus had claimed their fifth con-

secutive win on Friday after outclassing Lazio 2-0 in the Italian capital and are now just six points adrift and only one behind Roma.

Sarri had warned his side risked being fatigued due to their Europa League commitments but the Napoli coach suggested Destro had been marginally offside for his opener. "We went a goal down because of a refereeing mistake and at the start of the second half we had four clear chances to score," said Sarri. "When we didn't, and they got their third goal, the heads went down and that is a big mistake because the final minutes showed we still had plenty to give."

## RENAISSANCE

Bologna have enjoyed a renaissance since Donadoni took over from the sacked Delio Rossi last month and pounced on slack Napoli defending to take a 2-0 lead by the 21st minute thanks to Destro and a Rossetini header from a corner. Antonio Mirante was forced to save from Lorenzo Insigne and then, in spectacular fashion, to touch Jose Callejon's deflected volley onto the post. Napoli were firing on all cylinders when they emerged from the interval, but Higuain, Allan and Callejon all missed opportunities before an error by Marek Hamsik allowed Destro to fire under a nervous-looking Reina on the hour. Higuain reduced arrears on 87 minutes when he flicked Insigne's cross past Mirante and then again when he collected a Callejon long ball to fire past the 'keeper from just inside the box. But it was not enough for Napoli, who suffered their first defeat since losing to Sassuolo on the opening day of the season. Elsewhere, German Denis, Nicolo Cherubin and Dutchman Martin De Roon struck as Atalanta built on their shock 2-0 win at Roma last week with a 3-0 rout of Palermo to move up to sixth. — AFP



**BOLOGNA:** Napoli's midfielder from Slovakia Marek Hamsik runs with the ball during the Italian Serie A football match Bologna vs Napoli at the Dall'Ara stadium in Bologna yesterday. — AFP

## PLATINI HOPEFUL NEW DOCUMENT CAN CLEAR HIS NAME AT FIFA

**PARIS:** Michel Platini is hopeful that a new memo allegedly showing a payment agreement with suspended FIFA boss Sepp Blatter will clear his name in a corruption case and re-ignite the Frenchman's bid to become the next president of world soccer's governing body.

Facing a possible life ban for corruption, the suspended UEFA president was charged over a controversial \$2 million payment from FIFA in 2011 that Blatter said he approved as backdated salary for work by Platini as a presidential adviser from 1998-2002. Platini's communication team claimed Sunday that a 23-page memo they obtained earlier this week shows that UEFA's executive committee was aware of a deal with Blatter as early as November 1998. Blatter and Platini are expected to appear before the FIFA ethics committee within two weeks.

The document, which was leaked to French newspaper Le Journal du Dimanche, is an agenda for a UEFA executive committee meeting dated Nov. 12, 1998. At the time, Platini was not a member of the UEFA executive committee and had contributed to Blatter's successful campaign for the FIFA presidency. In an annex to the memo, a small note related to Platini's role with Blatter mentions that he is expected to become the federation's next director of sports.

According to Platini's communication team, the former soccer great's payment for his work with Blatter is clearly mentioned in the note, which reads: "There has been talk about Sfr 1 million as salary."

Platini previously said he had a verbal agreement with Blatter to be paid one million Swiss Francs per year. "Contrary to the thesis on which the case is built, this document demonstrates that Platini's contract with FIFA was not kept secret, and that many people within UEFA and FIFA were aware of it since 1998," Platini's lawyer Thibaud d'Ales said. The document was distributed during a meeting attended by then UEFA president Lennart Johansson, who lost to Blatter in the 1998 FIFA election, as well as three members of FIFA, Platini's advisers said. — AP

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ATHENS: A man walks as ferries are docked during a 24-hour strike called by labor unions at the port of Piraeus, near Athens. Greece's two largest unions, which cover the public and private sectors, have called a general strike to protest the government's budget, which was voted on in Parliament Saturday night. —AP

## GREECE PASSES 'TOUGH' AUSTERITY BUDGET

2016 BUDGET SEES ZERO GROWTH FOR THIS YEAR, CONTRACTION FOR 2016

ATHENS: Greek lawmakers approved a "tough" 2016 budget early yesterday, forecasting near zero growth for 2015 and a small contraction next year for the debt-ridden country in its sixth year of austerity. The coalition government, which enjoys a narrow majority, managed to push the budget through with 153 votes for and 145 against after a late-night session.

The leftist government of Alexis Tsipras is trying to apply the terms of an unpopular third EU economic bailout, enacted in July in return

for safeguarding the country's place in the eurozone by restructuring its economy. "Nobody can cheer for this tough budget", Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said late on Saturday during the tumultuous parliamentary discussion.

The 2016 budget, the first by the leftist Syriza-led government, expects zero economic growth in 2015 — better than an October forecast of a 2.3-percent contraction.

For 2016, it projects a 0.7-percent contrac-

tion, again better than the initial 1.3 percent forecast in the draft budget. "Behind the (budget's) numbers anybody can see the agonizing effort to support the working classes" Tsipras said early yesterday, describing the budget as "a difficult exercise".

The Greek government has already seen its parliamentary majority dwindle from 155 to 153 seats in its effort to implement the tough measures imposed by its creditors.

Measures facilitating foreclosures against

people who cannot pay their mortgages led to the loss of support from two lawmakers who refused to back the bill. Plans to slash the minimum monthly pension have caused two general strikes in a month, a sign that Tsipras faces a rough ride despite being reelected in September on the bailout program.

After first storming to power at the beginning of this year promising to free Greece from the restrictions of bailout programs, Tsipras in July accepted a three-year, 86-billion-euro (\$93-

billion) rescue deal with strict conditions to enact further cutbacks.

As part of the agreement, Greece is set to introduce new pension cuts next to keep its shaky retirement system viable. "They are getting ready to turn the pensions into tips", interim head of the New Democracy right-wing main opposition party Yiannis Plakiotakis said on Saturday.

He added that the budget is "anti-growth" and "socially unfair". —AFP

## QATAR LAUNCHES \$5.5BN LOAN INTO TEEMING MARKET

LONDON: The government of Qatar has launched a \$5.5 billion loan into general syndication, becoming the latest Gulf borrower to hit the market as countries, banks and corporates in the region seek to lock in cash before the year-end.

Qatar's five-year loan offers all-in pricing of 90 basis points over Libor. The country had initially hoped to raise up to \$10 billion with pricing of around 80 bps, but had to revise expectations against a backdrop of tightening liquidity and an upward trend in pricing in the region as the large number of Middle East deals began to saturate the market. Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Mizuho, SMBC, Deutsche Bank, Barclays and Qatar National Bank are arranging the loan and as it now stands Qatar is expected to successfully conclude the deal by the end of December, bankers said, with any market uncertainty already factored into the smaller deal size.

The deal has been helped by the deep pockets and cheaper funding of Japanese banks, which make up half of the lead bank group.

"Banks have a large appetite to hold this paper," one banker said. "Qatar is a premium credit: it has one of the highest GDP per capita levels in the world. Banks have large country limits for Qatar."

By contrast, the growing list of Gulf entities looking to borrow money has made it more difficult for some to close loans before the year-end, bankers say. Transactions finding it tough going include the US\$1 billion deal for Oman that is in the market.

"Oman is fully underwritten but it is not going so well in syndication - it is not getting good support." Oman is looking for a five-year facility paying a margin of 110 bps over Libor, which is being coordinated by Citigroup, Natixis and Gulf International Bank. The deal is fully underwritten by the three leads and commitments from other banks are due in the next few days.

Bankers say Oman is a very different prospect to Qatar. Oman's deal was not helped by the fact that it was downgraded by Standard and Poor's to BBB+ on Nov. 21, just after the offering was launched and, as a result, take-up so far has been sluggish. "Oman is fully underwritten but it is not going so well in syndication - it is not getting good support," a second banker said. "There are too many deals in the market and pricing is too tight - banks are starting to hold back." —Reuters



A pair of tanker trucks parked next to pumps at an oil-producing well in McKenzie County, ND. Lower fossil fuel prices have come at a painful cost: 122,300 lost jobs in the energy sector over the past year. —AP

## OPEC OVERSUPPLY LEADS TO LOW CRUDE PRICES: IRAN

DUBAI: OPEC members that supply too much crude oil to the market are responsible for low prices, Iran's oil minister said yesterday, two days after the cartel failed to agree on a production ceiling.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which accounts for about a third of world oil output, announced no change in policy at a meeting on Friday, setting the scene for more price wars in an already heavily oversupplied market. Oil prices have more than halved over the past 18 months to a fraction of what most OPEC members need to balance their budgets. Benchmark Brent and US crude futures fell nearly 2 percent after the meeting.

"The oil market anticipated OPEC's

decision, and the countries with an excess of supply are responsible for the consequences," Bijan Zanganeh was quoted as saying by Iran's Shana news agency. "It is known which countries currently have an excess of supply and there is no ambiguity about who they are," he added in a thinly-veiled barb at top exporter Saudi Arabia.

A year ago, Riyadh pushed through an OPEC decision to defend market share instead of cutting output, keeping supply high in the hope of driving high-cost producers such as U.S. shale firms out of the market. Ahead of Friday's meeting, Zanganeh had called for OPEC members to respect a self-imposed production ceiling of 30 million barrels a day to support prices, but said he didn't expect them to reach an

agreement. OPEC's actual production is well over 31 million barrels a day.

"There were two viewpoints at the meeting. One group thought there needed to be a production ceiling which, as well as stabilizing the market, would also control the current oversupply in the market," Iran's oil minister said.

"This view was not endorsed." Prices are likely to come under further pressure next year, when international sanctions on Iran are due to be lifted under a nuclear deal reached in July. Zanganeh says Iran has the right to reclaim the market share that Tehran lost under sanctions imposed in late 2011, and plans to increase exports by 1 million barrels a day after sanctions are lifted. —Reuters

## OIL DROP WEIGHS ON SAUDI; DOLLAR GAINS END EGYPT RALLY

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's stock market slid yesterday after oil prices dropped to within a few cents of a new six-year low and Egypt's bourse also declined after the dollar made gains. Riyadh's bourse slipped 0.3 percent as traders also awaited Saudi's annual budget announcement due in December. "The Saudi market has been trading sideways for sometime as investors await more clarity on macroeconomic policy," said Mohammad Al-Shammasi, chief investment officer at Riyadh-based Derayah Financial.

Jabal Omar Development fell 3.2 percent after reporting a 78 percent drop in annual profit that the property company blamed on lower sales and higher costs. Bahri, the largest Saudi transport company by market value, jumped 5.5 percent. Kingdom Holding rose 5 percent. After market close on Thursday, the company said a French sovereign wealth fund, CDCIC, along with some other French companies, bought a 0.8 percent stake. Chairman and majority shareholder Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal's ownership remains unchanged at 95 percent.

Saudi Arabian Fertilizer Company (SAFCO), rose 2.7 percent after the company said in a statement it will pay a dividend of 3 riyals (\$0.80) per share for the second half of 2015. In Egypt, Cairo's bourse slipped 0.8 percent to 6,272 points as investors booked profits following a three-session rally. The dollar strengthened on Friday on an upbeat US jobs report which also increased the likelihood of US interest rate hikes.

A stronger dollar will make it more expensive for Egypt's central bank to obtain much-needed dollars. Foreign investors were net sellers of Cairo stocks last week, despite attempts by the central bank to ease fears of a dollar shortage worsening.

Global Telecom climbed 4.2 percent to 2.00 pounds, rising for a fourth session. On Wednesday the company said a newspaper, which it did not name, had reported rumors that European firm Vimpelcom had offered to buy out Global at a price of 2.30 pounds per share. Vimpelcom already owns about 52 percent of Global. Allen Sandeep, director of research at Naeem brokerage, reiterated a "buy" rating on Global. He said Vimpelcom might use part of the proceeds from a loan refinancing expected by the end of this year to make an offer to buy the rest of Global. —Reuters

# RISKS GROW FOR OIL ECONOMIES IN GULF

## FRAGILE FIVE ECONOMIES NOW LESS SO: REPORT

**LONDON:** Emerging economies not long ago deemed at risk of crisis are seeing steady balance of payments improvements, while for oil exporters in the Gulf and elsewhere once-mighty cash surpluses have all but melted away.

The so-called taper tantrum of mid-2013 unleashed a wave of selling of assets from developing countries whose big funding or current account deficits left them vulnerable to the withdrawal of cheap money resulting from a slowdown, or taper, in the rate of US money printing.

With oil prices at the time over \$100 a barrel these tended to be fast-growing energy importers such as India and Turkey, which, along with Indonesia, Brazil and South Africa, were lumped together as the

Fragile Five. But thanks to the halving of oil prices since mid-2014 and sharply weaker exchange rates, gaps are narrowing.

India's deficit has shrunk to 0.9 percent of annual economic output this year, according to data compiled by JPMorgan, while Ukraine should post a surplus versus an 8 percent gap in 2012.

Others have improved less, with Turkey running a 5.2 percent deficit this year and Brazil, despite economic recession, seeing a bigger deficit than in 2012 at 3.4 percent.

"Lower oil prices are clearly helping to move trade balances so this is positive," UBS strategist Manik Narain said. "However none of the current account

improvements have come through stronger exports," he said. "Governments have inflicted quite a lot of pain on domestic demand to get the current accounts under control."

But if oil and currency adjustments are shrinking some deficits, commodity-reliant countries with fixed exchange rates are seeing the opposite. Venezuela's 2.9 percent surplus in 2012 for instance has swung into an 8.1 percent deficit. There are also dramatic declines in the Middle East, where the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries will run a 3.8 percent surplus this year - down from 22 percent in 2012 and 13.2 percent in 2014.

Oil earnings this year for the bloc comprising Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman,

Bahrain and United Arab Emirates will be \$275 billion less than 2014, according to the International Monetary Fund. Moreover, all GCC currencies except Kuwait peg their currencies tightly to the dollar. So with little relief on the exchange rate front, governments will need to slash budget spending to dampen import demand.

Jason Tuvey, Middle East economist at Capital Economics says the headline surplus is down to Kuwait and Qatar, which mask a Saudi deficit of as much as 7 percent of GDP. Smaller Oman and Bahrain have even bigger funding gaps.

While some reckon governments will have to loosen currency pegs, Tuvey reckons spending cuts are more likely, noting

that Saudi Arabia reacted to the 1980s oil price collapse by slashing capital spending more than 98 percent.

"A repeat of this would wipe out the budget deficit and push the current account position back into a sizeable surplus," he added. Other oil exporters which allowed their currencies to weaken have fared better, with Russia's surplus at 5 percent of GDP compared with 3.5 percent in 2012.

Malaysia's surplus has halved since 2012 but with the ringgit almost 30 percent weaker since the taper tantrum, there may be signs of a turnaround - imports are contracting and data on Friday showed exports growing twice as fast as expected. —Reuters

## QATAR FIRST BANK TO LIST SHARES IN 2016

**DOHA:** Qatar First Bank (QFB) plans to list its shares on the Qatar exchange as early as the first quarter of 2016, the chairman of the sharia-compliant financial institution said yesterday.

"We hope by the end of the first quarter of next year that we will be ready to list. Things are on the right track," Abdulla al-Marri told journalists at a press conference in Doha. The firm has long been linked with a flotation, in what would be only the second new listing in Qatar since 2010, although QFB would only put its shares onto the bourse to trade and would raise no new money from the event.

Traditionally focused on wealth and asset management and private equity, targeting investments in energy, real estate and financial services across the Middle East and Africa, QFB was also launching a private banking service, it said yesterday. The move was not related to difficulties in its private equity work or economic downturn in the Gulf Arab state, according to the bank's chief executive.

"We are offering private banking as a service as of today. We are not shifting away from private equity, we are building on it," said Ziad Makkawi, the veteran banker who was appointed to the role in July. Makkawi described the banking environment in the Gulf as "challenging" and said that investors were behaving cautiously at a time of low oil prices and a liquidity crunch. "The investment climate is not going to be as hot or as bullish as when oil prices were at 100 dollars a barrel. People are looking for a bit more certainty and are staying away from speculative kinds of investments," he said. —Reuters



NEW YORK: A trader works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Friday in New York City. —AFP

## ISLAMIC FINANCIAL PRODUCTION AMOUNTS TO \$1TN: EXPERT

**MANAMA:** Chairman of Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) Sheikh Ibrahim Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa said yesterday there is a significant increase in Islamic financial production and assets, amounting to approximately \$1 trillion.

In a statement during the opening of the AAOIFI World Bank Annual Conference on Islamic Banking and Finance held in the Bahraini capital yesterday, Sheikh Ibrahim said that Islamic finance has solidified its spot amongst the top tier of economic institutions. He also highlighted widespread use of prominent Islamic components such as sukuk amongst

some of the world's most developed nations.

As a result of the meteoric rise of Islamic finance, the AAOIFI chairman called for the introduction of Islamic financial standards for the international market to adhere to, particularly, a reference index that would verify the legality of Islamic financial products.

Moreover, Sheikh Khalifa noted that the AAOIFI has established a myriad of standards in legal, accounting, auditing and governmental realms in an attempt to unify Islamic financial transactions, in line with legal standards. AAOIFI Secretary General Dr Hamed Mirza underscored the importance of the AAOIFI Conference on

Islamic Banking and Finance, calling it a platform for which to issue Islamic financial standards, which would help overcome potential future obstacles.

Dr Mirza also said that the informative conference will discuss various components of Islamic finance including sukuk, bonds, shares and investment, focusing on contributions these components make to Islamic financial production.

Islamic finance refers to the means by which corporations in the Muslim world including banks and other institutions, raise capital in accordance with Sharia, or Islamic law. Its exponential growth has represented a new phase in the financial sector. —KUNA

## News

in brief

### Dollar falls against Kuwaiti dinar

**KUWAIT:** The US dollar moved down to KD 0.303, the euro moved up to KD 0.330 yesterday as compared to Thursday's trades, the Central Bank of Kuwait said. The CBK said the sterling pound was up to KD 0.458, as well as the Swiss franc to KD 0.304 while the Japanese yen firmed at KD 0.002.

### Pioneers seeks to buy Universal Co for Packaging

**CAIRO:** Egypt's Pioneers will offer to buy 100 percent of Universal Co for Packaging Materials and Paper for 7.5 pounds per share, a Pioneers official told Reuters yesterday. Pioneers specialises in market research and brokerage services but also has investment arms in real estate, industry and financial services.

### SAFCO will pay 3 riyals per share cash dividend

**DUBAI:** Saudi Arabian Fertilizer Company (SAFCO) will pay a cash dividend of 3 riyals (\$0.80) per share for the second half of 2015, it said in a bourse filing yesterday. This is in line with the payout the company, a unit of Saudi Basic Industries Corp (SABIC), paid in the corresponding period of 2014.

### Egypt's Banque Misr closes \$250m 3-yr loan

**DUBAI:** Banque Misr has raised a \$250 million loan of three years duration that Egypt's second-largest state lender will use for general funding purposes, the coordinator of the deal said yesterday. The transaction is the first time the bank has sought to borrow from international banks since the North African country was hit by political unrest at the start of 2011. Last month, Banque Misr's chairman told Reuters that the bank was close to completing a three-year loan which would pay a margin of 3.2 percent. Coordinator Bank ABC, as well as Emirates NBD, HSBC, Mashreq and Union National Bank, arranged the transaction, according to the statement from the Bahrain-based bank.

## GOLD PRICE RISES TO \$1,089 PER OUNCE

**KUWAIT:** The price of gold rose by 2.6 percent last week as it was traded at \$1,089 per ounce, breaking a pattern of low prices that lasted for six weeks, according to Sabayik Al-Kuwait Company.

Gold was traded at \$1,050 per ounce two weeks ago, its lowest price in five and a half years, said the company's director general Rajab Hamid in a press statement yesterday. Prices were affected by unstable international markets.

Gold prices were expected to go below \$1,050 per ounce due to the rise of US dollar against other main currencies, said Hamid. The rise in precious metals last Friday is a prominent occurrence, with expectations that the US Federal Reserve will raise the interest rate by 25 points in its upcoming meeting this month. Meanwhile, he expected gold price to rise further by the weekend, noting that buying rates recorded last week show that gold will not be affected by the rise in interest rate. Moreover, he noted that silver also saw a rise of 3.6 percent last Friday, reaching \$14.54.

Hamid also said that gold prices might drop to \$1,050 immediately now after cutting interest rates, however, prices will rise again above \$1,100 in 2016.

As for the local gold market, the official said that gold retail prices rose to KD 10.7 per gram by the end of last week. —KUNA

## NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ROLE IN KUWAIT STOCK EXCHANGE LIMITED

**KUWAIT:** The role of the National Portfolio in Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) is "still limited" and controlled by the regulations," Kuwaiti economists said yesterday. The main purpose of the portfolio, which was established at the end of 2008 is to adjust performance in the market as well as grab opportunities as they become available, economists said in separate interviews with KUNA. Many traders are waiting the portfolio to pump liquidity permanently in order to save some companies,

especially small ones, that are still suffering from missteps, suspension and loss of capitals, they said. The main goal from founding the National Portfolio is to support the market, and to attain this objective, there should be a permanent cooperation between the Portfolio and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to exclude companies that do not add new value to the overall performance of the market, Salah Al-Sultan, consultant to Arzaq Capital Company said. The market will not absorb inter-

vention of the portfolio as long as there are weak companies listed, he said, stressing the need to integrate them into a single entity to achieve added value.

The National Portfolio is working to control the market movement and grab opportunities as well as search for public and private benefit in addition to keep the procurement process, Chief Executive of A-Arabi Company for Financial Brokerage Maytham Al-Shakhs said. —KUNA

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.479
Indian Rupees	4.567
Pakistani Rupees	2.891
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.138
Nepali Rupees	2.873
Singapore Dollar	219.600
Hongkong Dollar	39.387
Bangladesh Taka	3.862
Philippine Peso	6.484
Thai Baht	8.520
Malaysian Ringgit	72.852

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.443
Qatari Riyal	83.894
Omani Riyal	793.270
Bahraini Dinar	811.080
UAE Dirham	83.152

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	38.200
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	39.051
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.425
Tunisian Dinar	153.010
Jordanian Dinar	430.260
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.035
Syrian Lira	2.177
Morocco Dirham	31.131

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	305.250
Euro	335.780
Sterling Pound	464.900
Canadian dollar	230.200
Turkish lira	105.530
Swiss Franc	309.110
US Dollar Buying	304.050

GOLD		
20 Gram	222.220	
10 Gram	113.805	
5 Gram	57.97	

UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL		
COUNTRY	SELL DRAFT	SELL CASH
Australian Dollar	204.08	
Canadian Dollar	231.95	
Swiss Franc	300.84	
Euro	326.66	
US Dollar	305.45	
Sterling Pound	461.91	
Japanese Yen	2.52	
Bangladesh Taka	3.874	
Indian Rupee	4.578	
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.139	
Nepali Rupee	2.859	
Pakistani Rupee	2.893	
UAE Dirhams	0.08312	
Bahraini Dinar	0.8118	
Egyptian Pound	0.03892	
Jordanian Dinar	0.4344	
Omani Riyal	0.7932	
Qatari Riyal	0.08422	
Saudi Riyal	0.08142	

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD	
Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.500
Canadian Dollar	230.865
Sterling Pound	461.645

Euro	324.265	
Swiss Frank	314.635	
Bahrain Dinar	810.840	
UAE Dirhams	83.470	
Qatari Riyals	91.520	
Saudi Riyals	82.190	
Jordanian Dinar	430.480	
Egyptian Pound	38.904	
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.139	
Indian Rupees	4.591	
Pakistani Rupees	2.893	
Bangladesh Taka	3.861	
Philippines Peso	6.480	
Cyprus pound	581.885	
Japanese Yen	3.480	
Syrian Pound	2.615	
Nepalese Rupees	3.865	
Malaysian Ringgit	72.820	
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	48.080	
Thai Bhat	9.505	
Turkish Lira	105.140	

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY		
COUNTRY	SELL CASH	SELLDRAFT
British Pound	0.453954	0.462954
Czech Korune	0.004317	0.016317
Danish Krone	0.0406058	0.045605
Euro	0.326337	0.334337
Norwegian Krone	0.031931	0.037131
Romanian Leu	0.087320	0.087320
Slovakia	0.009099	0.019099
Swedish Krona	0.031875	0.036875
Swiss Franc	0.299380	0.309580
Turkish Lira	0.100389	0.110689

AUSTRALASIA		
Australian Dollar	0.215523	0.227023
New Zealand Dollar	0.199453	0.208953

America		
Canadian Dollar	0.222491	0.230991
US Dollars	0.300300	0.304800
US Dollars Mint	0.300800	0.304800

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003509	0.004109
Chinese Yuan	0.046177	0.049677
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037174	0.039924
Indian Rupee	0.004324	0.004714
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002400	0.002580
Kenyan Shilling	0.003154	0.003164
Korean Won	0.000252	0.000267
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068482	0.074482
Nepalese Rupee	0.002916	0.003086
Pakistani Rupee	0.002701	0.002981
Philippine Peso	0.006390	0.006670
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.215238	0.221238
South African Rand	0.015286	0.023786
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001766	0.002346
Taiwan	0.009245	0.009425
Thai Baht	0.008195	0.008745

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.800536	0.808536
Egyptian Pound	0.037139	0.040265
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000201	0.000261
Jordanian Dinar	0.425343	0.432843
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000153	0.000253
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022124	0.046124
Nigerian Naira	0.001259	0.001894
Omani Riyal	0.784229	0.789909
Qatar Riyal	0.082900	0.084113
Saudi Riyal	0.080537	0.081237
Syrian Pound	0.001290	0.001510
Tunisian Dinar	0.147997	0.155997
Turkish Lira	0.100389	0.110689
UAE Dirhams	0.081896	0.083045
Yemeni Riyal	0.001376	0.001456

## INDIAN ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS ARE IMPROVING

## Asiya Capital Investments Company Analysis

By Camille Accad and Jordi Rof

**KUWAIT:** Emerging markets are going through a rough patch. Brazil is suffering its worst crisis in 80 years, Russia's economy is contracting close to 5 percent compared to the previous year and China continues to decelerate. Only one country in the group seems to be able to generate good news: India. In the third quarter of this year, real GDP growth accelerated from 7.0 percent to 7.4 percent YoY. While exports continued to contribute negatively on growth, the domestic sector remained robust, due to a rebound in investment and private consumption resilience. Private consumption has been growing at an average rate of 6.1 percent annually in the last three years, rising 6.8 percent YoY in the latest quarter. But the best part is the trend in investment, which went up rapidly in the last three quarters: from 2.4 percent YoY in the last quarter of 2014 to 6.8 percent in the three months ending in October this year.

According to the central bank, the reasons behind the good evolution on investment are low oil prices and better business conditions, facilitated by

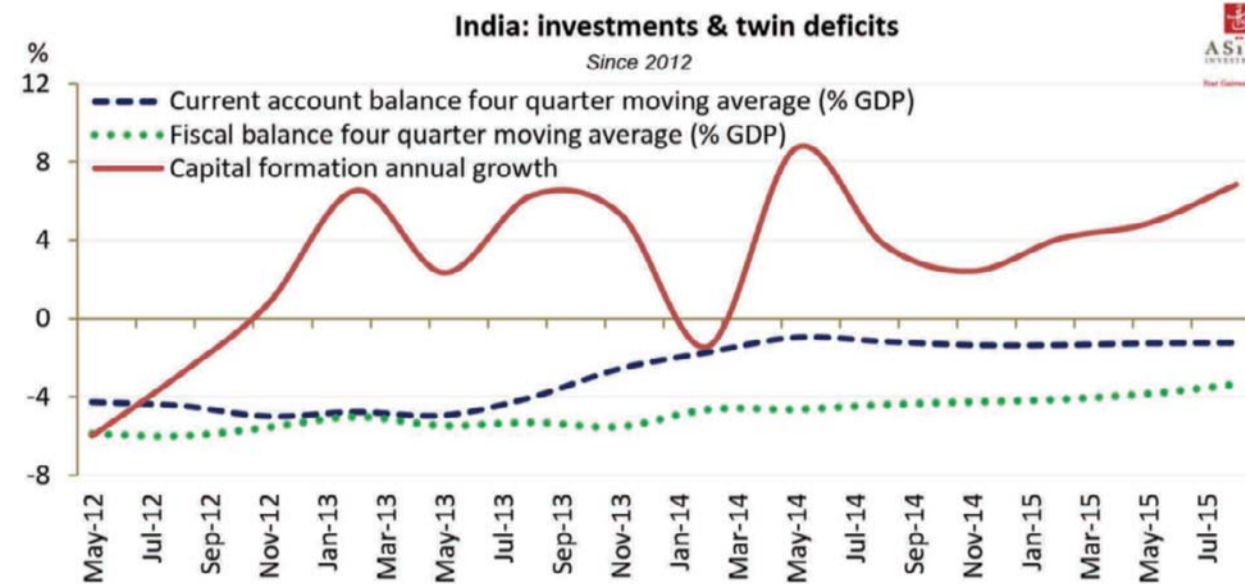
the boost in public capital spending and cheaper credit. Inflation, historically the key constraint for growth, has

central bank to cut rates four times, reducing the lending rate by 60 basis points so far. The "twin deficits" -

years from about 7 percent to 1 percent of GDP, and the fiscal deficit from 5 percent to 3.4 percent of GDP since

are implemented. The government recently eased restrictions for foreign investors, but two critical measures that will be able to simplify bureaucracy and reduce corruption - the goods and services bill - and free land for industry purposes - the land acquisition bill - are currently stuck in the upper house under amendment processes. Government inaction is a central cause of concern. The second risk is the price of oil. Low global oil prices have helped significantly to improve inflation and deficits, as the country is a major net oil importer and the government subsidizes gasoline. If prices were to rise, the room for reforms would disappear amid high inflation, higher interest rates, and growing deficits. However, given the current global supply and demand conditions, we do not expect this risk to materialize.

In summary, low energy prices have freed up government resources and allowed the central bank to keep rates low, which in turn is helping investment. However, India will not realize its true potential unless the government delivers the reforms that were promised.



improved markedly in the last year, mainly because food prices are stabilizing. Inflation has come down from 8 percent to 5 percent since early 2014, and that has made possible for the

simultaneous deficits in the current account and fiscal balance, that traditionally burden the Indian economy - are also improving. The current account deficit fell in the last two

the beginning of 2014.

But India's economic outlook is not without risks. First, growth will not be sustained unless crucial reforms to reduce red tape and boost investment



**FRANKFURT:** A broker watches his screens as the curve of the German stock index DAX went down at the stock market in Frankfurt on Friday. — AP

## EGYPT TO APPEAL \$1.76BN AWARD TO ISRAEL IN GAS ROW

**CAIRO/JERUSALEM:** Egypt said yesterday it would appeal an order by international arbitrators to pay \$1.76 billion in compensation to state-owned Israel Electric Corp for halting gas supplies three years ago, and freeze gas import talks until the dispute was resolved.

Egypt had been selling natural gas to Israel under a 20-year agreement, but the deal collapsed in 2012 following months of attacks on the pipeline by militant groups in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, which borders Israel and the Gaza Strip. Israel Electric (IEC) was forced to turn to more expensive fuels to generate electricity.

The company took the issue to arbitrators at the International Chamber of Commerce, demanding \$4 billion from the suppliers, Egyptian Natural Gas Holding Company (EGAS) and the Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation (EGPC), and the firm operating the pipeline, Eastern Mediterranean Gas (EMG).

IEC said on Sunday that arbitrators had ordered EGPC and EGAS to pay compensation of \$1.76 billion plus interest and legal expenses. "Israel Electric will act toward the implementation of the arbitration ruling through dialogue with the gas companies," it said. EGPC and EGAS said in a statement that the arbitrator had also ordered them to pay \$288 million to EMG and that they would appeal both awards.

They said the compensation awarded to EMG amounted to about 19 percent of the

\$1.5 billion it had sued for, while the award to Israel Electric amounted to under 40 percent of the total it was seeking. Egyptian Prime Minister Sherif Ismail said yesterday an appeal would be filed within six weeks.

The companies said they had "received instructions from the Egyptian government to freeze negotiations between companies to import gas from Israeli fields or to award import approvals until the legal position regarding the arbitration ruling and the results of the appeal are clear".

The ruling looks likely to sour recent talks by private companies to import Israeli gas via the existing subsea pipeline. On Nov. 25, developers of Israel's Leviathan offshore gas field announced a preliminary deal to pump natural gas to Egypt for up to 15 years. Plans call for Leviathan, which is expected to begin production in 2019 or 2020, to supply Egypt's Dolphus Holdings with up to 4 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas a year for 10 to 15 years.

Dolphus is a company that represents non-governmental, industrial and commercial consumers in Egypt. The gas would pass through an underwater pipeline built nearly a decade ago by EMG.

Egypt has said it still wants to import Israeli gas despite Italy's ENI discovering the large Zohr gas field off Egypt's coast in August. This year Dolphus also agreed a seven-year deal to buy at least \$1.2 billion of gas from Israel's Tamar field, near Leviathan. — Reuters

## PUERTO RICO RISKS CREDITOR IRE BY HIJACKING MONEY

## CARIBBEAN ISLAND DIVERS FUNDS EARMARKED FOR BOND PAYMENTS

**SAN JUAN/NEW YORK:** Puerto Rico may have dodged a bullet when it avoided default last week, but its decision to commandeer revenue that was supposed to meet future debt payments will invite creditor pushback and possibly lawsuits. Creditors have long criticized Puerto Rico's spending habits, and may have the ammunition to bring those complaints to court now that the Caribbean island plans to divert funds to cover constitutionally-guaranteed debt and essential government services.

The US territory, which owes creditors \$72 billion, last Tuesday avoided defaulting on a \$355 million payment. But it owes another such payment on Jan 1, which can only be made if revenue that was earmarked to repay and service other debt owed by various government agencies is repurposed, Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla said.

The island said it also needs to use that revenue to keep some key services operating, though it has not specified which ones. Many creditors said these so-called clawbacks are premature, and question whether they will be used on truly essential services. The government hasn't been specific about the revenue that will be grabbed. Bonds vulnerable to the switch include \$4.6 billion at Puerto Rico's highway authority (HTA), \$1.9 billion at its infrastructure authority (PRIFA), and additional debt at a public transportation authority and convention center authority, according to an executive order signed by Garcia Padilla.

One creditor source with exposure at the affected agencies said a lawsuit was possible, insisting that clawbacks were being misused under Puerto Rico's laws and constitution. "They haven't met the requirements to permit a clawback under the constitution ... you can assume

we're looking at all the different avenues," said the source. Two other sources said that, while lawsuits are an option, they were more inclined to wait to preserve their negotiating ability.

"There is a very high probability of protracted litigation," said Ted Hampton, vice president at Moody's Investors Service. "It's a bit like a race or some kind of competition - people are waiting to jump in when the whistle blows."

Hampton said he expected creditors would at least consider legal action over the clawbacks. Puerto Rican officials have themselves acknowledged the potential for lawsuits. Justice Secretary Cesar Miranda said last week that the clawbacks could open the door to litigation because they "could be interpreted as a technical default, in the way that we retain money destined to eventually pay a debt when due."

Creditors' frustration is likely to only increase in the next few weeks. For example, the island by December 20 owes \$120 million in Christmas bonuses for public sector workers, which are a constitutional requirement in Puerto Rico. Paying them at the expense of bonds would likely irk creditors, yet skipping them would outrage labor unions.

## BRIDGE LOAN

Exactly how the diverted cash is spent will invite investor scrutiny. A 1980 law in Puerto Rico dictates that any clawbacks should be used first to pay constitutionally backed debt, and then to fund essential services. Puerto Rican officials suggested they plan to use them for both purposes at once.

"There is little question that (the clawbacks) are a patent attempt to revise the provisions of the constitution, legislation and contracts without justification or required process," said Nader

Tavakoli, interim president and chief executive officer of Ambac Financial, which insures about \$1.1 billion principal of bonds at the affected agencies. A lawsuit could also challenge the type of services being funded, especially if they include what creditors may claim are discretionary items like Christmas bonuses.

Still, creditors wary of litigation say they want to be careful not to hurt progress in ongoing talks with the island on a consensual debt restructuring agreement. "We implore the governor to get back to the negotiating table toward consensual solutions, which are achievable," Tavakoli added.

Puerto Rico has said it wants to structure a universal exchange offer, or "superbond," for creditors across many different debt classes. Litigation would make that process more difficult, said several creditor sources, threatening the anticipated high ratings of new debt that could attract creditors to an exchange offer in the first place. If creditors can help the island to make its January payment without clawbacks, litigation may be avoided. Its next major maturity date is in May, when \$422.8 million is owed on senior Government Development Bank notes, according to a source familiar with the situation. That allows more time to talk, free from the pressure of looming defaults.

An offer by at least two bond insurers to provide a bridge loan to get Puerto Rico through January remains on the table, said two sources close to the talks. A lawsuit at this stage may not succeed. Without a missed payment, clawbacks alone might not convince a court of Puerto Rico's wrongdoing, said Height Securities Puerto Rico analyst Daniel Hanson. Creditors may fare better if they delay litigation until an actual default. — Reuters

## UAW WIN VOTE AT VW'S LONE US PLANT

**CHATTANOOGA, Tenn:** The United Auto Workers union has gained a significant first victory at a foreign-owned automaker in the South, easily winning a vote by skilled-trades workers at Volkswagen's lone US factory to have the UAW negotiate their collective bargaining agreements.

The workers who repair and maintain machinery and robots at the German automaker's plant in Chattanooga voted 108-44 for UAW representation over two days ending Friday.

Volkswagen objected to the new vote favoring the UAW to represent just 162 skilled-trades workers, arguing that all of the plant's 1,400 blue-collar workers should have a say over union issues. The German automaker said it plans to appeal the ruling allowing the vote to the full National Labor Relations Board. "We believe that a union of only maintenance employees fractures our workforce and does not take into account the overwhelming community of interest shared between our maintenance and production employees," the company said in a statement.

The vote comes nearly 20 months after the union was narrowly defeated in an election involving all hourly employees at the plant. The UAW has been thwarted for decades in attempts to represent workers outside of General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler.

Ray Curry, the director of the UAW's Southern region, said the overwhelming union victory should persuade Volkswagen to drop its legal challenge. "We urge Volkswagen to respect the decision of its employees and recognize the local union as the representative of the skilled trades unit," he said at a news conference Friday punctuated by beeping car and truck horns of union supporters celebrating.

The American Council of Employees, a rival labor group at the Volkswagen plant, in a letter to workers before the vote criticized the move to organize the smaller group of workers. The group said the effort would serve to "subdivide maintenance workers with no concern for how this might negatively impact employees' long-term interests." The group also criticized the

union for seeking the vote amid the automaker's efforts to cope with its diesel emissions cheating scandal that contributed to a 60 percent drop in sales of the Chattanooga-made Passat in November.

"Volkswagen and our facility are in the midst of a crisis," the letter said. "We need unity now more than ever." Mike Cantrell, the president of UAW Local 42 in Chattanooga, said the vote was announced weeks before cheating revelations surfaced.

"The timing of the skilled trades election is unrelated to the Volkswagen emissions scandal,"

he said. Volkswagen also argued that the formation of the small bargaining unit goes against its hopes of creating a German-style works council at the plant to represent both hourly and salaried employees. The union disagreed, saying the move by the skilled-trades workers was just a first step.

"We have said from the beginning of Local 42 that there are multiple paths to reach collective bargaining," Cantrell said. "And we believe these paths will give all of us a voice at Volkswagen in due time." — AP



**CHATTANOOGA:** Mike Cantrell, the president of UAW Local 42, speaks about the union's win in an election among skilled-trades workers at the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga. The maintenance workers voted 108-44 to be represented by the UAW in collective bargaining negotiations. — AP

## EGYPTIAN POUND HOLDS STEADY AT FOREX SALE

**CAIRO:** The Egyptian pound held steady at an official foreign currency auction yesterday and strengthened slightly on the black market Egypt, which depends on imported food and energy, is facing a dollar shortage and mounting pressure to devalue the pound. The central bank surprised markets when it strengthened the pound on Nov 11 by 20 piasters against the dollar.

On Thursday, it sold 39.5 million dollars at a cut-off price of 7.7301 pounds to the dollar, unchanged from Thursday, with a pro-rata of 33.33 percent.

The official rate is still far from the black market, which was around 8.52 pounds to the dollar on Sunday, making the pound marginally stronger than Thursday's rate of 8.53 pounds, one trader said. Egypt's reserves have tumbled from \$36 billion in 2011 to \$16.4 billion in October, and the country has been rationing dollars through weekly dollar

auctions to banks, keeping the pound artificially strong. On Tuesday, the central bank said it had changed the way it allocated dollars at its foreign exchange auctions. It provided fewer banks with dollars but at higher allocations.

Previously, banks in Egypt had been accustomed to receiving a regular quota of dollars at each foreign currency sale. Since the changes, some banks said they were declined dollars at the regular auctions. The country has been starved of foreign currency since a popular uprising in 2011 ousted autocrat Hosni Mubarak and drove tourists and foreign investors away.

In February, the central bank imposed capital controls, limiting dollar-denominated deposits to \$50,000 a month in an attempt to fight the black market. The move caused problems for importers, who could no longer source their foreign currency needs. — Reuters

# A (NOT ENTIRELY) DEAD WEEK AHEAD BEFORE FED WEEK

## GLOBAL ECONOMY WEEK AHEAD

**LONDON:** The calm before the storm? Here comes the "dead week" before the US Federal Reserve raises interest rates for the first time since June 2006 - 9 1/2 years ago. It will be a week of last-minute positioning by financial markets before the expected hike on Dec. 16 and scrutiny of various global data releases to see what risks there are to the move.

But first, let's put it in historical perspective. The last time the Fed raised its fed funds rate, Barack Obama was a freshman senator, Angela Merkel was barely half a year into her job as German chancellor, Twitter had yet to be launched and - unintentionally hinting at the financial turmoil to come - a top film was "Ice Age: The Meltdown". Even more remarkable, perhaps, is that all these years later the Fed is an outlier in its

move to tighten. A total of 43 central banks have eased monetary policy this year, including the European Central Bank, which cut its deposit rate deeper into negative territory in the past week.

Some emerging market central banks, such as Brazil's, have been forced to tighten to protect their currencies, and some policy-makers, such as those in the Bank of England, are itching to end their

ultra-easy money regimes. But the global economy - slow, uneven and with barely any inflation in many places - has been putting a lid on what some economists like to call policy normalization.

This should be underlined on Thursday when the Bank of England makes a decision on its Bank Rate. No one in a Reuters poll expected any change from the record low 0.5 percent that has been in place since March 2009. The Bank of England's last rate increase was in July 2007.

Markets, in the meantime, have become addicted to cheap, plentiful cash - part of reason there was a negative reaction to the ECB's move when it did not loosen as much as some had expected.

forecast of 7.0 percent under review for a downgrade," ING said in a note.

"We expect nothing in next week's data - trade, inflation and monetary aggregates are due - to alter the picture," Reuters polls for the trade data, due on Tuesday, suggest both exports and imports will have continued to decline on a year-on-year basis, albeit at a slower pace.

China's wobble and scant inflation in economic powerhouses such as the euro zone, Japan and Britain are the main economic risks weighing on normalisation.

They should not, however, deter the Fed - at least initially.

Emerging markets, in the meantime, have had plenty of time to digest the idea of higher Fed rates, which can draw money away from them. So the Fed move after the coming week is not likely to cause any kind of widespread crisis. Capital Economics, however, reckons some countries are more vulnerable to others. Venezuela, China, Argentina, Ukraine, Thailand, Turkey and Colombia top the firm's list of countries where the economies may get into difficulty. — Reuters

### CHINA LOOMS

With this as a backdrop, the main data in the coming week may well be from China, where the economy has been struggling and having a wide spill-over effect because of the country's import/export might. "The manufacturing ... reading for November portrayed continued weak activity, prompting us to put our (fourth-quarter) GDP growth

### Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Sunday 06 December 2015

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price Index	▲ 3.15	5,791.89	5,788.74	5,796.38	5,770.66
Weighted Index	▼ -1.31	392.80	394.11	394.19	391.23
KSX 15	▼ -5.92	933.20	939.12	939.12	929.13



Volume	121,395,389
Value (KWD)	10,932,194
Number of Trades	2,806

Security	Trades					
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last Change
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	114	▲ 0.0
IKARUS	92	90	204,019	18,432	16	▲ 0.0
IPG	248	248	523	130	1	▲ 10.0
NAPESCO	610	580	2	1	2	▲ 20.0
ENERGYH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
GPI	60	57	6,273,272	369,799	152	▲ 2.0
ABAR	116	116	250	29	1	▲ 10.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>6,478,066</b>	<b>388,390</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>▼ -1.53</b>
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
BPC	560	550	117,666	65,780	7	▲ 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	188	188	636,069	119,581	22	▲ 0.0
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>753,735</b>	<b>185,361</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>▲ 0.0</b>

Security	Trades					
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last Change
SOKOUK	47.0	46.5	448825	20,968	16	▲ 0.0
KRE	61	60	152,259	9,266	12	▲ -1.0
URC	93	93	12,108	1,126	2	▲ -2.0
NRE	94	92	428,013	39,754	27	▲ 0.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
AREC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
MASSALEH	60	55	20,010	1,101	2	▲ -5.0
ARABREC	31.0	30.0	1,318,853	39,880	25	▲ 0.5
ERESCO	66	64	4,932	324	3	▲ 0.0
MABANEE	940	920	485,180	437,180	25	▲ 0.0
INJAZZAT	92	90	10,700	964	2	▲ 0.0
INVESTORS	29.5	29.0	6,557,911	190,729	60	▲ 29.0
IRC	31.5	30.0	32,150	998	4	▲ 0.5
ALTIJARIA	84	82	403,514	33,494	12	▲ 0.0
SANAM	44.5	44.5	5,999	267	1	▲ 4.5
AAYANRE	81	81	2,050	166	2	▲ 0.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
ALAQARIA	23.0	23.0	50	1	1	▲ 23.0
MAZAYA	108	108	50,000	5,400	6	▲ 108
ADNC	32.5	30.5	28,944,882	900,789	377	▲ 0.5
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 0.0
TIJARA	42.5	42.5	300,000	12,750	1	▲ 42.5
TAAMEER	25.5	24.5	756,574	18,677	31	▲ 25.5
ARKAN	118	112	717,975	82,069	36	▲ 114
ARGAN	174	172	40,925	7,047	3	▲ 172
ABYAAR	31.0	30.5	55	2	2	▲ 31.0
MUNSHAAT	87	84	1,004,015	85,236	31	▲ 86
FIRSTDUBAI	51	48.5	580,455	28,702	21	▲ 49.5
KBT	44.0	43.0	864,965	37,520	23	▲ 43.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 140
MENA	25.5	25.5	129,757	3,309	7	▲ 25.5
ALMUDON	34.0	34.0	904,431	30,751	24	▲ 34.0
MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 23.5
REMAL	38.0	37.5	277,901	10,447	10	▲ 38.0
MASHAER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 106
<b>Real Estate</b>			<b>44,434,509</b>	<b>1,998,917</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>▼ -1.25</b>

Security	Trades					
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last Change
KCEM	395	395	9,810	3,875	1	▲ 395
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 315
CABLE	390	380	29,434	11,285	6	▲ 390
SHIP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 146
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 1.40
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 400
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 79
ACICO	290	285	7,160	2,078	4	▲ 290
GMCM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 495
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 132
KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 365
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 210
NICBM	232	226	3,022	701	2	▲ 232
EQUIPMENT	61	60	958,089	57,834	31	▲ 61
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 84
GYPNUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 102
SALBOOKH	82	81	60,800	4,926	6	▲ 82
AGLTY	530	520	689,002	359,364	29	▲ 530
EDU	216	216	76,504	16,525	5	▲ 216
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 43.5
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 390
KGL	46.0	45.5	180,000	8,218	6	▲ 46.5
KPC	212	212	500	106	1	▲ 212
HUMANSOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 1,020
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 188
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 300
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 70
MAYADEEN	23.0	22.5	134,371	3,024	3	▲ 23.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 780
MTCC	76	74	2,269,229	170,500	75	▲ 75
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 700
ALAFCO	218	214	14,378	3,077	3	▲ 218
MUBARRAD	80	80	6,000	480	2	▲ 80
LOGISTICS	56	54	832,134	45,623	46	▲ 56
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 86
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 82
QCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 80
FCEM	74	74	40,000	2,960	1	▲ 74
RKWC	110	108	103,410	11,188	11	▲ 110
SPEC	84	84	9,700	815	1	▲ 84
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>5,423,641</b>	<b>702,576</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>▲ 1076.41</b>

Security	Trades					
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last Change
KINV	102	100	85,000	8,620	3	▲ 102
FACIL	182	180	40,500	7,292	8	▲ 180
IFA	31.5	30.5	1,097,000	33,928	43	▲ 30.5
NINV	102	100	152,457	15,376	8	▲ 100
KPROJ	580	570	1,177,140	682,605	42	▲ 580
COAST	33.5	32.5	674,480	22,241	34	▲ 33.5
SECH	46.5	45.0	4,590,828	207,645	73	▲ 45.5
SGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 110
ARZAN	37.5	37.5	16,586	622	4	▲ 37.5
MARKAZ	104	100	90,467	9,280	6	▲ 104
KMEFIC	30.0	28.0	134,000	3,877	15	▲ 30.0
ALAMAN	57	56	332,500	18,832	13	▲ 56
ALOLA	61	59	94,157	5,560	5	▲ 61
ALMAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 32.5
GIH	31.0	30.5	1,010,061	30,945	32	▲ 31.0
AAYAN	51	49.5	359,800	17,915	24	▲ 50
BAYANINV	37.0	36.5	758,108	27,776	19	▲ 37.0
OSUL	37.5	32.5	33,796	1,169	5	▲ 37.5
KFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 42.0
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 102
NIH	63	62	60,010	3,721	3	▲ 63
ISKAN	35.5	34.5	750,270	26,067	34	▲ 34.5
MADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 20.5
ALDEERA	35.0	34.5	83,818	2,896	4	▲ 34.5
ALSALAM	39.0	38.0	493,057	18,760	26	▲ 39.0
EKTTITAB	32.0	31.5	531,520	16,991	20	▲ 32.0
QURAINHLD	8.0	7.0	468,650	3,454	11	▲ 7.5
ALMADINA	45.5	45.0	635,595	28,603	26	▲ 45.5
NOOR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 55
TAMINV	425	415	76,000	31,550	2	▲ 425
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 130
TAIBA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 88
KSHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 27.5
STRATEGIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 33.0
ASIYA	37.0	35.5	57,265	2,052	9	▲ 35.5
GNAHC	31.0	30.5	749,900	22,927	19	▲ 31.0
AMWAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 31.0
ALMIAZ	78	78	49,400	3,853	2	▲ 78
MANAZEL	25.0	24.5	2,515,562	62,194	50	▲ 24.5
NIND	138	134	371,641	50,552	18	▲ 134
BIHC	32.5	32.0	220,800	7,164	12	▲ 32.0
SENERGY	14.5	14.0	1,048,823	14,890	24	▲ 14.5
AGHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	▲ 82
KPPC	58	57	661,796	37,72		



# ECB DECISION FUELS VOLATILITY IN THE MARKET

## NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Last week revolved around the highly anticipated European Central Bank's meeting, where measures taken by the ECB did not meet expectations fuelling volatility in global financial markets. In a conference after the meeting ECB President Mario Draghi announced a 6-month extension to the bank's current 60 billion Euros a month quantitative easing program, and expanded the assets purchased to include local and regional bonds. The fresh measures indicate further widening in monetary policy divergence with the ECB adding stimulus as the US Federal Reserve prepares to start its process of normalization. Meanwhile, the disappointment from the ECB's announcement was clearly felt in the financial markets, sending the Euro higher and equities and government bonds lower.

On Friday, investors shifted their focus towards the US nonfarm payroll figure, employers added more jobs than forecast in November, underlining Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen's confidence that the US economy is strong enough to withstand higher borrowing costs.

On the Foreign exchange side, the US dollar Index opened the week on a strong footing despite disappointing data from the manufacturing sector. The Index soared to a high of 100.510 amid a positive ADP employment report. However, the Index managed to lose most of its gains as the ECB measures fell short of market expectations triggering a broad based US Dollar sell-off. The greenback dropped to a low of 97.591 on Thursday. On Friday, the Dollar managed to rise amid the release of the positive US nonfarm payrolls number and close the week at 98.246.

The euro traded in a volatile manner last week, as it opened the week at 1.0593 and traded in a very tight range ahead of the ECB announcement. Despite the fact that measures taken by the ECB indicate more widening in the divergence between the central bank and the Fed, the Euro gained dramatically against the greenback after the meeting. The single currency managed to reach a high of 1.0981 after touching a low of 1.0524 amid the ECB announcement which disappointed market participants, who were expecting more aggressive measures than the ones announced. The currency managed to close the week at 1.0881.

The sterling pound opened the week at 1.5036. Cable then fell against most of its counterparts after data showing that output in the UK construction sector expanded at the slowest rate in 7 months in November which pushed the pound to a low of 1.4895. The currency gained dramatically against the US dollar to a high of 1.5159 amid positive data combined with a US Dollar sell-off following the ECB meeting. The currency closed the week at 1.5111.

The Japanese also gained against the greenback last week. The USDJPY opened the week at 122.80. The pair managed to reach a high of 123.67 mid-week. However, the Dollar failed to hold on to these gains and dropped to a low of 122.30 against the Yen. Finally the pair closed the week at 123.11.

Similarly, the Swiss franc traded in a tight

range ahead of the ECB decision, but managed to gain as the ECB measures did not meet market expectations. The currency opened the week at 1.0302 and managed to gain against the greenback to reach a high of 0.9876. The greenback managed to gain some of its losses on Friday and closed at 0.9960 against the franc.

The Australian dollar continues its surge against the US dollar as the Reserve bank of Australia continues to leave its key lending rate unchanged combined with positive growth data. Additionally, the Aussie found support amid the broad based sell-off of the US dollar which occurred at the end of the week. The currency opened the week at 0.7193 and reached a high of 0.7363. Finally, the Aussie closed the week at 0.7338 against the dollar.

On the commodities side, light crude still managed to close the week lower as a supply glut overweighed the weakness in US dollar. West Texas light crude opened the week at 41.71 and dropped to a low of 39.84. Oil managed to regain some of its losses and closed the week at 39.97. Gold on the other hand, managed to post its first weekly gain since October after disappointment over the European Central Bank's stimulus decision which fuelled a retreat in global equities. Spot gold opened the week at 1057.45 and managed to close the week at 1086.34.

### US manufacturing

Manufacturing in the US unexpectedly contracted in November at the fastest pace since the last recession as a jump in inventories led to cutbacks in orders and production. The Institute for Supply Management's index dropped to 48.6, the lowest level since June 2009, from 50.1 in October. The figure was weaker than expectations in the market. In addition to a build-up in inventories, the manufacturing sector is also battling weak global demand, an appreciating dollar and less capital spending in the energy sector.

### Positive ADP report

US private employers added 217,000 jobs in November, above expectations and the most since June, signaling job growth is likely strong enough to support the first Federal Reserve interest rate hike in nearly a decade when policymakers meet later this month. Expectations in the market were for a gain of 190,000. Additionally, October's figure was revised higher to 196,000 from 182,000.

The number of people who filed for unemployment assistance in the US rose more than expected last week, but remained below 300,000 indicating further strength in the US labor market. In a report, the US Department of Labor said that the number of individuals filing for initial jobless benefits in the week ending November 28 increased by 9,000 to a seasonally adjusted 269,000 from the previous week's total of 260,000. Analysts expected jobless claims to rise by 8,000 last week. First-time jobless claims have held below the 300,000-level for 38 consecutive weeks, which is usually associated with a firming labor market.

### Non-farm payrolls

US Employers added more jobs than forecast in November, underlining Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen's confidence that the US economy is strong enough to withstand higher borrowing costs. The 211,000 increase in payrolls followed a 298,000 gain in October that was bigger than previously expected. The unemployment rate held at a more than seven-year low of 5.0% and the number of unemployed persons at 7.9 million was essentially

unchanged. Over the past 12 months, the unemployment rate and the number of unemployed persons are down by 0.8 percentage point and 1.1 million, respectively.



unchanged. Over the past 12 months, the unemployment rate and the number of unemployed persons are down by 0.8 percentage point and 1.1 million, respectively.

### ECB measures fall short

The European Central Bank measures fell short of market expectations to bolster price growth in the euro area on Thursday after it cut the deposit rate and extended the duration, but kept the pace of its bond-buying purchase program unchanged. The ECB's governing council lowered the deposit facility rate to -0.3% from -0.20%, disappointing some analysts' expectations for a bigger cut to -0.4%. The main refinancing rate was left unchanged at a record-low 0.05%, in line with market expectations. The central bank also held its marginal lending rate, the rate charged to banks when they borrow from the ECB, at 0.30%. ECB President Mario Draghi said that the bank would also expand its bond-buying purchase program beyond the current cut-off point of September 2016 until the end of March 2017, or beyond if necessary.

Additionally, the central bank expanded the assets purchased to include local and regional

### UK manufacturing PMI falls

Manufacturing activity in the UK expanded at a slower rate than expected in November, dampening optimism over the country's economic outlook. UK manufacturing PMI fell to a seasonally adjusted 52.7 last month from a revised reading of 55.2 in October. Meanwhile, analysts had expected the index to decline to 53.6 in November. The report showed that, the strongest expansion in output was seen at consumer goods producers. Solid growth was also registered in the investment goods sector.

### UK construction PMI

UK construction sector activity expanded at the slowest pace in seven months in November, underlining concerns over the health of the economy. In a report, market research firm Markit and the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply said that their UK construction purchasing managers' index declined to a seasonally adjusted 55.3 last month from a reading of 58.8 in October. Economists had expected the index to fall to 58.2 in November.

UK service sector activity expanded at the fastest pace in four months in November, boosting optimism over the health of the econ-

omy and supporting the case for higher interest rates. In a report, market research group Markit said that the seasonally adjusted Markit/CIPS Services Purchasing Managers Index increased to 55.9 last month from a reading of 54.9 in October. Analysts had expected the index to rise to 55.0 in November.

### RBA holds rates

Australia's central bank kept interest rates steady for a seventh month last week as data

showed exports provided a huge lift to the economy last quarter and helped fill a hole left by business investment. The Reserve Bank of Australia reiterated that low inflation meant there was room for a cut in the 2% cash rate should signs of recovery disappoint in coming months. But for now it sounded content to take a wait and see stance. "The Board again judged that the prospects for an improvement in economic conditions had firmed a little over recent months and that leaving the cash rate unchanged was appropriate," said RBA Governor Glenn Stevens in a statement.

### Australia GDP rises

Australia's gross domestic product rose more-than-expected in the last quarter. In a report, Australian Bureau of Statistics said that Australia's GDP rose to a seasonally adjusted 0.9 percent, from 0.2 percent in the preceding quarter. Meanwhile, analysts had expected Australia's GDP to rise 0.8 percent only.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30355

The USDKID opened at 0.30355 yesterday morning.



A Mozambique farmer works in her farm. — AFP

## MEGA AGROBUSINESS GROWING RESENTMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

**MUTUALI, Mozambique:** Immense reserves of gas and coal in northern Mozambique have attracted foreign investors in recent years, but so has its fertile soil, much to the concern of small farmers displaced by agricultural mega-projects.

For the purchase of her house and two hectares (five acres) of fields, Regina Macomba, a farmer in her 50s, received 6,500 meticals. That is the equivalent of 130 euros (\$140) or two months of the minimum wage. But she did not have a choice about whether to sell.

Agromoz, a joint venture between the Amorim Group owned by Portugal's wealthiest family and Intelic, a company owned by former Mozambican president Armando Guebuza (2005-2015), had obtained a government concession in 2012 to farm soybeans on 10,000 hectares in the remote area near the border with Malawi.

Hundreds of others have also been evicted since 2013 to make way for the mega farm that will produce the soybeans for feed for chickens. "Three days after receiving my indemnity payment, the bulldozers arrived to destroy our homes and we had to carry our belongings and food away on our heads as the sun came up," recalled Macomba, now resettled in Mutuali.

Nearby stands the wood frame of what will even-

tually become the house of Arnaldo Francisco, 26, who was also evicted in 2013 but has yet to put a new roof over his head.

"I've had to tend my crops first," he said as he pulled seeds out of piri piri peppers, which are a mainstay of Mozambican cuisine. Neither Macomba nor Francisco know how to read and neither speak Portuguese, the national language in Mozambique.

They signed the detailed documents explaining their compensation for damages plus interest despite not understanding them.

Agromoz said it acted in accordance with the law and conducted the entire process in full transparency. "It wasn't the company that fixed the level of compensation, but the Mozambican government which determined what should be paid to each family," said Agromoz's chief executive, Andre Luft.

Nevertheless he acknowledged the swift eviction of the farmers tarnished the company's public image.

### 'Explosive situation'

Agromoz justified its action because the project was behind schedule due to community consultations. And with it currently exploiting only a fifth of the concession, other small farmers still face the threat of eviction. "The Agromoz situation is explo-

sive, nobody knows what could happen," said Antonio Muagere, head of the PPOSC umbrella group uniting local civic groups.

He placed the blame for the current tensions on the government, which he said failed in its role as a mediator. Non-governmental organizations are concerned that the Agromoz scenario will be repeated on a much larger scale. The Prosavana project, which emerged from a 2009 cooperation pact with Brazil and Japan, concerns 10 million hectares or just over a quarter of Mozambique's arable land.

The first draft of the project released in 2013, which called for adopting industrial farming practices used in Brazil to boost soybean export capacity when five million Mozambicans suffer from chronic food insecurity, sparked an outcry among farmers' associations. Earlier this year the government presented a second draft of the project which took into account many of the concerns voiced by small farmers. Work was continuing to incorporate the views of civic groups to the second draft, according to Prosavana's coordinator, Antonio Limbau.

But Manuel Pedro Massava, a representative of Mutuali's farmers, was skeptical. "Agromoz was a lesson for us. We saw how people were treated and the same thing will happen with Prosavana," he warned. — AFP

## ABENGOA STRUGGLE CASTS CLOUD ON JOBS, BANKS IN SPAIN AND ABROAD

**MADRID:** As Spain's flagship renewable energy giant Abengoa teeters on the edge of bankruptcy, concerns are mounting over the fate of thousands of employees and its numerous projects around the world, just weeks ahead of crux general elections.

The group filed for protection from its creditors late last month, giving it four months to find a solution to its astronomical debt or go bankrupt and become Spain's biggest-ever corporate failure.

Since then, creditors, unions and the government have been trying to get a clearer idea of the group's financial situation, and a grouping of seven banks has appointed auditors KPMG to comb through the accounts of the company and its 600-plus subsidiaries, according to the Bloomberg financial news agency. "They are very indebted... their total liabilities could be more than 25 billion (euros)," Industry Minister Jose Manuel Soria estimated Friday.

As the December 20 general elections approach, Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has yet to comment on the possibility of a Spanish company that employs 28,700 people globally-including nearly 7,000 in his own country-going down.

The government has ruled out any form of state bailout, with Economy Minister Luis de Guindos stressing the need "to find out exactly what the accounting and debt situation of the company is".

### Investors already burnt

The world player in solar and wind power, biofuels and water management says it had a gross debt of nearly nine billion euros at the end of September. But lawyers who filed a legal complaint against the board today say it could stand at 25 billion euros.

"Investors have been burnt by other bankruptcies in Spain, when debt was found hidden away," said ISM Capital analyst Antoine Bourgault. He pointed for instance to the surprise, high-profile bankruptcy of Spanish packaged seafood giant Pescanova in 2013,

which had secretly amassed a pile of debt.

Unions too are waiting, worried about mass layoffs. Francisco Carbonero, head of the CCOO union in the southern region of Andalusia where Abengoa is headquartered-said he was holding out for the KPMG report.

"For the moment, they haven't come out with a redundancy plan," he said, adding nevertheless that a large number of short-term contracts had not been renewed over the past few weeks.

The group, which is present in some 20 countries, makes nearly 87 percent of its turnover abroad-with North America its largest market, followed closely by South America.

Already in Brazil, unions are concerned, with the Sintepav grouping that represents workers in the country's construction sector saying it is expecting 5,000 jobs to be cut.

### Small-scale shareholders

Spain's banking sector, which is only just emerging from the devastating crisis that saw it rescued with a 41-billion-euro eurozone bailout, could also be hurt. "Banks' bottom-line profits this year will likely fall short of our forecasts, as they start provisioning for the potential losses they could face," said the Standard & Poors ratings agency.

"Given the company's large scale... and its high leverage... Abengoa is a significant exposure for most of the Spanish banks we rate," it said. But it added that the pressure was not exclusively on Spanish banks, as the group also had access to foreign lenders given its large worldwide footprint.

Small-scale shareholders fear they will get burnt again. "After having overcome the financial crisis, with the hard costs that implied for individual savers, and having witnessed fraud directly linked to bad business practices, it seemed that the wind was changing," said Javier Cremades, head of Aemec, an association representing minority shareholders. "But unfortunately that has not been the case," he wrote in the El Pais daily. — AFP

## BURGAN BANK WINS J P MORGAN 'QUALITY RECOGNITION AWARDS' OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2015

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced that it has received the coveted 'Quality Recognition Awards' for the year 2015 from JP Morgan Chase. The awards acknowledge the bank's consistent, high quality performance and standards in

the complete range of USD funds transfer operations the management and staff have maintained during the year.

J P Morgan Chase recognizes the bank for achieving 99.0 percent straight-through processing (STP) in the MT103

category and 99.7 percent in the MT202 category, thus, entitling Burgan Bank to the 'Elite Quality Recognition Award' in both categories. Burgan Bank was among the few banks across the MENA region to receive the Elite level of the

award for both its customer and bank to bank transfers.

Sherif Abdelsalam, Executive Director - Treasury Services - Head of GCC Financial Institutions Coverage at J P Morgan Chase, said: "Since 1997, we have presented the Quality Recognition Award to acknowledge the consistent, high quality performance of our clients' fund transfer operations management and of their staff. This year, less than 1 percent of our fund transfer clients were qualified for this highly remarkable award. For that, I would like to congratulate Burgan Bank for being one of those few deserving it, which further illustrates the bank's leading presence in the global financial services market."

Commenting on the bank's prestigious win, Adrian Gostuski, Burgan Bank Group's Chief Operating Officer said: "The J P Morgan Chase awards demonstrate Burgan Bank's commitment to quality offered to its clients, for both MT

103 & MT 202 Payments. We are proud to have the best-in-class straight-through processing STP rates and it is testimony to the hard work and dedication of our operations team in achieving the best in class solutions to meet customers' financial needs."

He added: "On behalf the entire team at Burgan Bank, I would like to thank J P Morgan Chase for recognizing our exceptional financial services, and to thank our employees in maintaining high quality performance and standards for funds transfer operations, which always proves our Objective "Driven by you."

Since 1997, J P Morgan Chase has presented awards to selected US dollar clearing clients that achieved a best-in-class level of operational excellence. These awards are given to clients who achieve outstanding straight-through results by properly formatting their SWIFT payments.



## OOREDOO KUWAIT, HUAWEI ALIGN ON FUTURE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA COMPANIES CONCLUDE FIRST ANNUAL STRATEGY SUMMIT

**KUWAIT:** Senior executives from Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, and leading global ICT solutions provider Huawei recently concluded the companies' first Annual Strategy Summit in China with the aim to extend cooperation in developing new technology platforms as well as supporting local community initiatives in Kuwait, aligned with the partnership between Ooredoo group and Huawei.

The summit was the first of its kind since Ooredoo Kuwait and Huawei signed a memorandum of understanding earlier this spring to

hold a bilateral strategy summit on a yearly basis. During the event, top management from both companies participated in a series of visits to R&D centers and solution exhibitions in Shenzhen and Shanghai, multiple roundtables and executive business dinners, under the theme of "Transform Together, Succeed Together".

Taking place at the global headquarters of Huawei in the coastal cities of Shenzhen and Shanghai in China, the three-day summit was attended by leaders such as Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani, CEO of Ooredoo Kuwait, Hani Elkukhun, COO of Ooredoo Kuwait, Hendrik Vorster, CTO of Ooredoo Kuwait, as well as management team from Ooredoo Kuwait, while from Huawei Steven Yi, President of Region management Department with other management executives, along with Huawei-Ooredoo Kuwait Account team lead by Anas Mahaftha.

During the summit, the companies signed two new memorandum of understanding as a means to consolidate their global partnership on strategic cooperation as well as showcase the learnings from Ooredoo Kuwait's latest Future Mode of Operation (FMO) project, involving latest managed IT and Network operations solutions from

Huawei. The FMO project was awarded to Huawei in July 2015 and has continued to be implemented successfully over recent months.

"Choosing Huawei as our partner was the right choice," says Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani, CEO of Ooredoo Kuwait. "This summit made us more confident and eager to see broader and deeper cooperation with Huawei."

"As a longstanding partner of Ooredoo, we recognize the significant value that comes from sharing best practices and bringing together minds from around the world to address opportunities specific to local markets," says Steven Yi, President of Region management Department at Huawei. "This summit in particular will continue to provide a forum for Ooredoo and Huawei to succeed together in building a better connected Kuwait and delivering the value of innovation to local customers."

This year's summit topics included how to better leverage the power of Big Data to understand customers and drive more personalized services for them. Customer experience management also stood out as a prominent topic, with the two companies reviewing new solutions for measuring and then delivering improvements in user satisfaction & loyalty. The companies further examined the future of mobile video platforms as users in Kuwait increasingly look for rich, high-definition multimedia services for entertainment and working on the go.

Outside of the technology area, Ooredoo Kuwait and Huawei have also agreed to work closer in developing and supporting corporate social responsibility campaign within Kuwait and across the region. In recent years Ooredoo and Huawei have partnered in the development of Ooredoo's mobile broadband capabilities including the commercial launch of LTE services in Kuwait and Radio Modernization projects. Ooredoo and Huawei have since expanded their relationship to include plans on IP transmission networks modernization, Core network virtualization, and LTE service expansion.



## JAZEERA AIRWAYS BOOSTS FREQUENCY TO RIYADH

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways yesterday announced it will increase flights between Kuwait and Riyadh, KSA, to four flights a week starting January 1, 2016. The airline currently operates three weekly flights between Kuwait and Riyadh on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The additional flight will be operated on Thursdays. In addition to serving the Saudi capital, Jazeera Airways operates flights between Kuwait and the Saudi tourist city of Jeddah every day of the week with double daily flights on Thursdays and Saturdays. The additional Riyadh service is designed to serve the needs of business travelers looking to return home before the weekend, and leisure travelers looking to spend their weekend in Riyadh.

Travelers may book to Saudi and other high-demand and popular destination in

the Middle through jazeeraairways.com or through airline's native mobile apps (available on iOS, Android, and Windows). Travelers may also book offline through the airline's call center on 177 (in Kuwait).

Based in Kuwait, Jazeera Airways serves popular destinations in the Middle East with a consistent on-time performance of 95 percent in 2015. The airline offers online booking and check-in and airport self-check-in kiosks to reduce waiting time. Jazeera Airways operates a fleet of Airbus A320 aircrafts with two class cabins comprising a business class and an economy Class. Business class travelers are offered an upgraded experience, with exclusive check-in counters, business lounge access, and up to 60 kilograms in free baggage allowance. The airline's economy class offers travelers 40 kilograms free baggage allowance.



The first ever trade exhibition, organised by Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), one of the premier business chambers of Pakistan, was held in Kuwait at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce Exhibition hall. The Two-Day Trade Exhibition (1st & 2nd December, 2015) was officially inaugurated by Pakistan Ambassador to Kuwait HE Muhammad Aslam Khan.

The exhibition witnessed a variety of products manufactured in Pakistan including Sports Items, Soccer Balls, Surgical & Dental products, cutlery & kitchen ware, auto parts, Safety Gloves, Factory Garments, Military Badges, Textile and Leather goods.

Amongst various clusters of trade & industry in Pakistan, Sialkot Industry stands tall amongst all which produces world-renowned items. Almost 99% of

their produced items are exported all around the world. It has been observed that various Sialkot-made products like factory units, sports and surgical items are re-exported to Kuwait under a third country brand.

This visit of exhibitors from Sialkot Chamber provided with the chance for local importers to strike direct business deals with them to save their added cost on purchase of same item with minor value addition from another country.

The event was very first of its kind because none of the 35 business chambers of Pakistan have ever attempted to showcase their potential in Kuwait so far and that too under the close co operation and co ordination from Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The exhibition lasted for two days from 10:00AM till 4:00PM.



## NISSAN HOSTS REGIONAL ANNUAL FLEET CONFERENCE IN DUBAI

**DUBAI:** In line with its participation at the Dubai International Motor Show, Nissan held its annual fleet conference to showcase its 2016 line-up to customers, industry leaders, and partners in the region.

The event took place in Dubai over a period of two days, during which key fleet customers had the chance to experience what Nissan is

offering in the coming 12 months, and give their feedback on the vehicles. A total of 43 cars were on display at the event that was held at the Meydan hotel in Dubai as a start, and then moved to Miramar hotel in Fujairah followed by a visit to the Dubai International Motor Show.

The two-day event featured a keynote presentation by Fadi Ghosn,

Chief Marketing Officer of Nissan Middle East, who gave some insights about Nissan's brand power, and communications strategy.

"This event offers an opportunity for our clients and partners within the industry to come together and learn from each other," said Ghosn. But what is most satisfying from holding such an event is that Nissan

learns even more by listening to the feedback it gets from its business partners. We, at Nissan, are pleased to see the continuous business support and commitment from our clients towards the Nissan brand and the feedback we received over the course of two days from our new and long term clients was inspiring and informative," he added.



## AUB: KD 250,000 AWAITING AN AL-HASSAD GRAND AWARD WINNER

**KUWAIT:** The countdown for the fourth and final draw for the year 2015 has commenced. The draw will be held on the 30 December to determine the winner of the quarterly award (lifetime salary) provided by Ahli United Bank through the Al-Hassad Awards for Islamic Saving program. The lucky winner will reap a prize totaling KD 250,000 payable through continuous monthly payments of the award.

Ahli United Bank invites all its customers, existing and new, to take the opportunity of the quarterly Grand Prize and increase their accounts balances in Al-Hassad Account thereby increasing their winning chances in this program. This program offers prizes with the high-

est value reaching KD 3.4 million annually with 26 weekly prizes, the largest number of weekly winners.

All customers interested in winning and achieving profits conforming to Islamic Sharia can open an Al-Hassad Account for Islamic Saving with a minimum KD 100 deposit. Minors can also open the account through their legal guardians or custodians.

Through these simple steps to open Al-Hassad Account, Ahli United Bank confirms it is the ideal choice to increase the value of its customer's savings along with realizing their dreams through the first and only awards program conforming to Islamic principles and provisions.

Ahli United Bank is a leading Islamic Bank in Kuwait with over 74 years history. The Bank successfully converted to operate according to Islamic principles in April 2010. Since then the Bank has received excellent evaluations from major rating institutions. It has also obtained a number of awards including the Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait in 2015 for the third consecutive year. The award was provided by the International "The Banker" magazine.

For more information about the "Al-Hassad Islamic Saving Program" added to the Investment Saving Account, the prizes and eligibility criteria, please visit any of Ahli United Bank branches, or call "Hayyakum" at 181,2000.

## US CAN'T ACCESS NSA PHONE RECORDS IN CALIFORNIA TERROR CASE

**WASHINGTON:** The US government's ability to review and analyze five years' worth of telephone records for the married couple blamed in the deadly shootings in California lapsed just four days before the attack, when the National Security Agency's controversial mass surveillance program was formally shut down.

Under a court order, those calling records at the NSA are now off-limits to agents running the FBI terrorism investigation, even with a warrant. Instead, under the new USA Freedom Act, authorities were able to obtain about two years' worth of calling records directly from the phone companies of the couple blamed in the attack. The period covered the entire time that the wife, Tashfeen Malik, lived in the

United States, although her husband, Syed Farook, had been here much longer. She moved from Pakistan to the US in July 2014 and married Farook the following month.

FBI Director James Comey declined to say Friday whether the NSA program's shutdown affected the government's investigation in California. "I won't answer, because we don't talk about the investigative techniques we use," Comey said.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said the FBI was looking through records for the couple. "This includes things like their foreign travel, their contacts with other individuals, their use of social media," he said. Amid questions about whether it was constitutional and under

pressure from lawsuits and recommendations by two federal panels, the Obama administration agreed to end the NSA phone program. It had secretly collected the daily calling records, but not contents of conversations, for most Americans, including those never suspected of any crime, since at least 2006.

The government kept five years' worth of each person's phone records, deleting older ones on a rolling basis. NSA contractor Edward Snowden revealed the program's existence in 2013.

Under a shutdown order by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, the government was prohibited from collecting phone records in wholesale ways starting Nov. 29.

"After November 28, 2015, no access to the BR (business record) metadata (phone records) will be permitted for intelligence analysis purposes," US District Judge Michael W. Mosman ruled. "Hence, queries of the BR metadata for the purpose of obtaining foreign intelligence information will no longer be permitted."

The California shootings happened four days later. The court revealed the order publicly just hours before the shootings. Under the new law, passed in June, investigators still can look for links in phone records but they must obtain a targeted warrant to get them directly from phone companies, which generally keep customer records for 18 months to two years.

The FBI was investigating whether the

couple in California plotted the attacks in ways that U.S. or allied intelligence surveillance programs might have detected. The FBI director cited "indications of radicalization by the killers, and of potential inspiration by foreign terrorist organizations," but he said there was no evidence the killers were part of a larger group or cell.

The FBI said it found discarded, crushed cellphones that belonged to the couple near the site of the shootings, and agents were examining the phones' contents. An American Civil Liberties Union lawyer, Alex Abdo, noted the California shootings were another case where the NSA's inspection of Americans' phone records failed to stop the plot before it happened. — AP



This photo provided by Samsung shows Samsung Gear VR.

## 'WALKING DEAD' EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SINKS TEETH INTO VR

**LOS ANGELES:** While experimenting with virtual reality for his latest project, "The Walking Dead" executive producer David Alpert and his crew relied on a very old-school form of technology when filming in 360 degrees: The hidey-hole!

"The assistant director would go around and say, 'OK. Everyone, get in your hidey-hole!'" said Alpert, who is also president of Skybound Entertainment. "Everyone in the camera department would look around and check if you could see them. If they could, they'd say, 'You need a new hidey-hole!'"

Being outside the view of cameras capturing every angle was just one of the many challenges that Alpert uncovered while working on "Gone," a live-action episodic VR series produced for Samsung's Milk VR service. The first installment of the 11-part mystery debuts Dec. 8.

"Gone" explores what happens when a child goes missing. The story unfolds from

a main 360-degree perspective. At certain points throughout "Gone," viewers are able to zoom in on clues using the touchpad on the side of Samsung's Gear VR headset, which utilizes Samsung smartphones as a display device.

"The Walking Dead" fans will have to wait for a VR experience based on the franchise. Alpert noted that modern VR is still evolving and that he wanted to first produce an original story in VR before tackling zombies in the immersive medium.

"In the beginning when TV came out, people started just by putting radio on TV," he said. "Then, when the Internet came, people said, 'Let's put TV on the Internet.' It takes a while to find that native medium. I don't think the best thing to do is to take an established brand and just plopp it in VR."

This story has been corrected to show that there are 11 installments of "Gone" and that it debuts Dec. 8. — AP

## VTECH HACK EXPOSES ID THEFT RISK IN CONNECTING KIDS TO INTERNET

### HACKERS STOLE PERSONAL INFORMATION OF 6M CHILDREN

**BOSTON/SINGAPORE:** Parents who gave their child a Kidizoom smartwatch or a VTech InnoTab tablet may have exposed them to identity theft after Hong Kong-based VTech said hackers stole the personal information of more than 6 million children.

The breach underscores how digital products aimed at kids often have far weaker security than other computer products, and may pose a threat to a booming industry. Shipments of toys that connect to the Internet will rise 200 percent over the next five years, according to estimates by UK-based Juniper Research.

It's not clear what the motive was for the VTech breach nor whether it has resulted in any identity theft so far. Still, it's a warning for people who don't understand how much data and sensitive information is in a child's toy.

"The last thing you would ever imagine is that a toy manufacturer would lose your child's identity," said Liam O'Murchu, a Symantec Corp researcher known for his work dissecting complex malware produced by nation states. "This shows that it's harder and harder to do things safely online," he said.

In VTech's case, buyers of the company's cameras, watches and tablets are encouraged to provide names, addresses and birth dates when signing up for accounts where they can download updates, games, books and other content.

VTech said the hackers compromised its Learning Lodge app store, which provides content for children's tablets, and its Kid Connect mobile app service that lets parents communicate with those tablets.

Toys that gather data on the user, like VTech's line of cameras, watches and tablets and their associated websites, will grow by 58 percent annually, according to Juniper.

That category includes dolls like Mattel Inc's recently introduced Hello Barbie, which connects to home wireless networks and communicates with servers to enable conversations by uploading audio and getting responses from the cloud.

Mobile security firm Bluebox and independent security researcher Andrew Hay on Friday disclosed

that they had jointly uncovered multiple vulnerabilities in iOS and Android apps that work with the device, as well as its cloud servers operated by technology partner ToyTalk.

Among their findings, they claimed that the app could be hacked to reveal passwords, could be tricked into connecting to hostile networks controlled by hackers and that the servers were vulnerable to some types of attacks.

Mattel spokesman Michelle Chidoni said that the toymaker and Hello Barbie technology partner ToyTalk have taken steps to ensure the products meet security and safety standards. ToyTalk said in a statement that it had already fixed many of its issues raised.

It's too soon to say if the breach will hurt VTech's sales. Still, its stock fell 2.6 percent this week as it hired forensic experts, responded to government investigations on three continents and temporarily shut down more than a dozen websites, including a messaging service and kids' app store.

Mark Stanislav, a researcher at the security firm Rapid 7 Inc, whose wife is expecting their first child in a few weeks, began looking into problems with children's products after hearing about security flaws in baby monitors, and he subsequently found such problems in products from eight baby monitor vendors.

After disclosing the flaws to the companies earlier this year, he said most have been fixed. He told Reuters he has since found problems in websites that connect other types of devices to kids, including one from a major manufacturer. He will go public with those findings next month after giving manufacturers time to fix the problems.

Identity thieves use compromised data to pose as their victims, get loans or credit cards or apply for services such as utilities. Other types of criminals assume stolen identities to evade capture by police.

#### CLEAN SLATES

Children offer credit slates to fraudsters that can be exploited for years without the victim's knowledge, said Tom Kellermann, chief cybersecurity officer with Trend

Micro Inc. "Kids have a longer life in front of them and they have completely clean credit, which makes them more valuable," Kellermann said.

A child's name, birth date, email address and Social Security number are worth \$30 to \$40 on some underground markets, more than the \$20 value of most adult profiles, he said. Research by Carnegie Mellon University in 2011 found that more than 10 percent of a sample of stolen children's social security numbers had some sort of fraudulent activity associated with them, a proportion 51 times higher than adults.

A child might not find out that their identity had been stolen until they are in their late teens, said Michelle Denny, Cisco Systems Inc's chief privacy officer who founded an identity-theft site for parents, theidentityproject.com.

"It's a pain when you are an adult, but for a child it can have so much more harm," said Denny. "Somebody might fail a background check for first job, or get arrested because a child molester stole their identity."

Still, VTech has some frustrated customers, even though cyber experts said the stolen VTech data has yet to turn up on forums where such information is sold. "My concern is: Myself and other unlucky parents out there buying these products during the holidays and have no warning that they may not be able to use these products now or in the future," said Sarah Brace, a Canadian who commented on VTech's Facebook pages.

And it may attract US regulatory scrutiny. US rules enforced by the Federal Trade Commission limit how personal information collected online from children under age 13 is treated. That information can include photos, videos and chat logs, just the sort of data that appears to have been collected by VTech, said Phyllis Marcus, a former FTC official now at the law firm Hunton & Williams LLP.

The FTC declined to confirm or deny any probe of VTech. Authorities in Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and the US states of Connecticut and Illinois have said they are looking into the breach. — Reuters

## VIDEO GAMES SPARK 'GAMIFICATION' CRAZE

**NEW YORK:** Creating a video game is a daunting, yet rewarding task. Along with countless hours of research, design and testing, teams can spend a great deal of time putting the pieces together. And being able to walk into a place and get instant feedback on your prototype can only enhance the experience.

"I wanted to find something where I could fit in and belong and I found them online, showed up one day and never stopped coming again," says Joe Wilson, a video game designer.

Recently at Buffalo Game Space, near the city's downtown, enthusiasts like Wilson discussed new releases of games, put the finishing touches on a game's animation, and jotted down the date for an upcoming electronic music class.

The Space, which began as a small group's quest to find like-minded people, has turned into a support network for independent game designers. The group teaches workshops, offers up its facility for game gurus to create, and every so often hosts a Game Jam.

"They're 48 hours, usually, hack-a-thons for game development. That's a chance for members to test their skills and also come up with

new, interesting ideas," says P.J. Moskal, a workshop coordinator at Buffalo Game Space.

#### LIFE'S A GAME

With so many people playing video games, it is no wonder that psychologists have taken a keen interest in what makes the games so compelling. And "gamification," a buzzword of late, has been working wonders in the workplace and classrooms for years. In the simplest terms, gamification happens when a game-like environment is introduced to drive certain behaviors.

Take the popular social media app Foursquare, for example. It's motivated millions of users to compete with one another and collect "badges" each time they visited a place with their mobile phone. Starbucks even piggybacked off the idea and rewarded customers with free coffee whenever they checked in via Foursquare at one of their coffee shops.

Video games have been all the rage for decades. Buffalo Game Space prides itself on being the go-to place in Upstate New York for creators who are ready to level up.

"This is probably the first time in

Buffalo that we have this outlet where people can actually present their games to others and get constructive feedback," says Moskal.

Buffalo Game Space, near downtown Buffalo, is a place for people to learn, collaborate, and make games.

#### CREDIT BUFFALO GAME SPACE FACEBOOK

Gamification has taken over our lives, thanks to video games. The Strong in Rochester boasts one of the world's most comprehensive collections. Stop by the museum's International Center for the History of Electronic Games (ICHEG) and you'll find more than 55,000 items, including some of the most important arcade video games of all time, every major video game platform that ever existed, and a wide selection of consoles from different countries.

ICHEG Director Jon-Paul Dyson says video games have also played a crucial role in getting people to understand how society works. Still, there's a feeling in some households that they are nothing but an evil temptation that does more bad than good.

"Video games have been part of

this long story going from novels to movies to television to comic books in which people have feared this thing, then eventually accepted and embraced it. The key determinant there in making the change is simple familiarity and generational turnover."

#### GAMIFICATION A FAD?

While gamification techniques do get people to change their behavior, some are critical of the trend and say the word is misused. They also say there's been a heavy focus on the incentives, and that could be misleading.

"If you're trying to force something or get people to do something or game elements they don't want to do, it's probably not going to work," says Dyson.

"I'm personally interested in serious games - games for training, education, health, even for social change. But it shouldn't be mistaken for reward systems. It's really all about motivating people to achieve certain goals, not pushing the rewards onto the player because of some scheme," says Moskal.

Playing games - whether for fun or otherwise - does show that people of all ages are more than able to attain rewards, solve problems, and work towards a higher goal. But whether play is the best way to experience the world remains to be seen.

Organizers at Buffalo Game Space are always trying to take its gaming services to the next level. Moskal says he'd like the forward-thinking group to focus future efforts on diversifying the roster of developers in the area.

"We have a huge refugee community in Buffalo. I'm an immigrant myself. And it would be really great to reach out to these communities because there's a lot of potential there. People play games in every culture."

And so far its faithful members have enjoyed having a place to let their creativity flow and fully immerse in video games without apology.

"I fell in love with the Space and I've been trying to do everything I can to support them," says Joe Wilson.



Microsoft's Xbox One and Sony's PlayStation 4 have only recently been available in China, after a 15-year ban on console gaming was lifted in June.

## VIDEOGAMES SHOULD BE 'HEALTHY'

**BEIJING:** The Ministry of Culture has expressed its commitment to ensure "healthy" content of videogames and to attract older people to gaming, following the lifting of the 15-year ban on gaming consoles and arcades, Xinhua reported. While China has many opportunities for gaming companies, the industry lacks innovation and promotion in the country, according to a statement released by the Ministry of Culture. The statement was released after a gaming industry conference in Beijing on Sunday, Nov. 22.

"Game content should be healthy and not cross the red line," said the statement. It also said that arcades should be light and spacious. While the statement did not elaborate on what it meant by "healthy," the authorities have been known to block the release of games that are deemed too violent or pornographic. The

Ministry of Culture also stressed that games should cater to different age groups, not only serving teenagers.

The Chinese government has had a long-standing fear that games could have an adverse effect on young people.

In June, the ministry lifted its ban on the making and selling of gaming consoles after 15 years of them being contraband in the country. This allowed Sony's PlayStation 4 and Microsoft's Xbox One to compete with PC games. Chinese companies are gaining an expanded presence in the gaming market.

Tencent Holdings Ltd. has stakes in large foreign gaming companies like Activision Blizzard, the developer of "Call of Duty" and "World of Warcraft." China's online gaming market was worth 110.8 billion yuan in 2014, according to iResearch.cn.

## US COURT CLASH ON 'OPEN INTERNET' RULES

**WASHINGTON:** Backers and opponents of "Open Internet" rules clashed in a federal appeals court, in the third round of a battle on how US broadband providers may be regulated.

The so-called "net neutrality" case, one of the most hotly contested tech policy issues in Washington, tests whether online services like Netflix, Yelp and new startups should have equal access through Internet service firms like Verizon and AT&T. Supporters of the rule argue that it is needed to ensure access to any type of online service without a gatekeeper, while critics say the FCC is using an antiquated, heavy-handed standard that will ultimately stifle a free Internet.

Two previous efforts by the US Federal Communications Commission were tossed out by the appellate court in Washington, but earlier this year the agency tried again with a new twist—reclassifying broadband firms as "common carriers" which can be regulated like phone companies under a 1934 law.

Peter Keisler, arguing on behalf of cable and telecom providers before the three-judge panel, said the FCC overstepped its authority in the rules approved in February.

He said that Congress, in updating telecommunications law in the 1990s, specifically said the Internet should be treated as "a core information service" that should be exempted from regulation.

Judge David Tatel questioned the attorney, saying that Internet service providers were merely transmitting data and as such could be considered similar to phone carriers.

"Aren't (consumers) just buying access to the Internet?" the judge asked. Keisler responded that consumers "are buying the ability to retrieve information" and as such must be considered a different entity. Jonathan Sallett, the lawyer arguing for the FCC, said that even though Internet firms use more advanced technology they essentially serve the same function as the phone company by transmitting data from one point to another.



One collection at The Strong Museum's International Center for the History of Electronic Games includes more than 250 arcade games.



AJDOVSCINA, Slovenia: A photo shows Pipistrel Taurus Electro electric two-seat airplane flying above Ajdovscina. —AFP photos



AJDOVSCINA, Slovenia: CEO and founder of Pipistrel Ivo Boscarol (right) inspects a part of an airplane.



AJDOVSCINA, Slovenia: An employee works on a part of an airplane at the Pipistrel factory.

## ELECTRIC PLANES AIM TO SOAR HIGH FOR CLEANER AVIATION SECTOR

'THIS AIRCRAFT WILL CROSS THE ATLANTIC, FLY FASTER AND CARRY MORE PERSONS'

**AJDOVSCINA, Slovenia:** Ultra-light, fast and cheap: more than a century after the Wright brothers flew the world's first powered aircraft, a small Slovenian company now hopes to revolutionize the aviation industry with its award-winning electric planes. Pipistrel's pioneering Taurus Electro is seen as a breath of fresh air in a sector responsible for 13 percent of CO2 emissions from all transport sources. Launched in 2007, around 20 orders are now put in every year for the two-seater plane, which is produced in a factory in the town of Ajdovscina, close to the Italian border.

The 110,000-euro (\$120,770) price tag is offset by the plane's inexpensive maintenance: at 70 cents an hour, the Taurus is 10 times cheaper to run than traditional twin-seater planes, according to Pipistrel. Simplicity is key: you charge the battery, hop inside the cockpit and hit the "on" button to activate the fuselage's propeller. The large-winged aircraft can thrust itself to an altitude of 2,000 meters (6,500 feet), after which the engine is retracted and the Taurus glides across the sky as a sailplane.

"You have just two buttons, up and down and full power, but you can always switch off immediately when you need to slow down the aircraft," explained pilot Nejc Faganelj, soaring high above the Slovenian countryside on a sunny winter's day. But behind the deceptively easy usage lies a highly complex design. The most crucial element—and biggest challenge—is the lithium battery, which needs to be light yet sturdy so that it doesn't catch fire if it overheats. "To

copy a design from the car industry is not that difficult. But to make something that is lighter, more efficient—that is definitely something that has not been done before," said Pipistrel engineer Jure Tomazic.

### Secret night flights

Now Pipistrel has even loftier ambitions: to sell the world's first electric four-seater plane. Its Taurus G4 prototype—built by combining two twin-seaters—won NASA's prestigious Green Flight award in 2011, worth \$1.35 million. The plane covered 650 kilometers (400 miles) in the space of two hours with an average speed of 172 kilometers per hour. "The car industry, with all the money it has at its disposal, and practically no weight limitation, even today isn't capable of producing an electric car that would take four passengers for 600 kilometers at a speed of 200 kilometers per hour," Pipistrel's founder, Ivo Boscarol told AFP.

"We did that with our electric plane," he added proudly. The son of a machine engineer turned test pilot, Boscarol has spent the last three decades developing and perfecting his low-carbon invention. When he built his first aircraft in the 1980s, he had to test-fly them in secret and only after dark—at the time piloting private planes was prohibited in Slovenia, then part of the former communist Yugoslavia. The night flights, along with the aero-dynamic shape of the plane wings, inspired Boscarol to name his company after the pipistrelle bat. Today, the Slovenian firm is a global market

leader in the field of energy-efficient aviation travel, with Boscarol featuring on the 2015 list of news outlet Politico's most influential Europeans. "I'm sure the electric flight will become a standard. This aircraft will be able to cross the Atlantic, to fly faster, to carry more persons," he said confidently.

### Hybrid is the future

However, large aircraft companies remain cautious, saying there's still a long way to go before the technology can be used for heavy passenger planes. "I don't think we'll see an entirely electric plane for another 50 years," said Philippe Petitcolin whose Safran company supplies engines to Airbus planes. Nevertheless, "in 20 or 30 years, we may be able to fly regional commuter jets with around 60 people onboard thanks to hybrid electric propulsion," according to Airbus Group boss Tom Enders. The corporate giant currently explores this vein with its E-Fan, a twin-seater plane powered by two 30-kilowatt electric motors. The ultra-light aircraft aims to offer aero clubs an alternative to traditional planes, both noisier and more polluting.

But, there's still a lot of room for improvement: the E-Fan currently only has a one-hour flight range. Last summer it however managed to cross the English Channel, 106 years after Frenchman Louis Bleriot became the first person to make the journey in a heavier-than-air plane. The E-Fan's exploit shows what can be possible with "a future aviation based on more electric technologies," according to Airbus. —AFP



AJDOVSCINA, Slovenia: A photo shows a cockpit of the Pipistrel Taurus Electro electric two-seat airplane is seen before take-off in Ajdovscina.



AJDOVSCINA, Slovenia: An employee works on a part of an airplane at the Pipistrel factory in Ajdovscina.

## STRESS AND DEPRESSION LINKED TO STROKE RISK IN DIABETICS

**NEW YORK:** People with diabetes are much more prone to depression and stress than other individuals, and these mental health problems in diabetics are tied to an increased risk of strokes and deaths from cardiovascular disease, a US study suggests. The worst outcomes may result when people with diabetes suffer from both stress and depression at the same time, the study found. This trifecta of health problems was linked to more than double the risk of death from heart disease faced by people without any of these medical issues.

"Our study is one of the first to show a pattern of increased likelihood of adverse cardiovascular outcomes in those with diabetes compared to those without diabetes - first with increased likelihood for either (stress or depression) alone, and then an even higher likelihood when both behavioral co-morbidities were reported," lead study author Doyle Cummings of East Carolina

University Brody School of Medicine, said by email.

To assess the impact of these mental health problems on heart disease and stroke risk, Cummings and colleagues reviewed data on nearly 22,000 adults including close to 4,100 with diabetes. People in the study were 64 years old on average, 58 percent of them were female, 42 percent were black, and 56 percent lived in the southeastern US region known as the "Stroke Belt" for its high prevalence of these cardiovascular events.

At the start of the study, roughly 19 percent of participants had diabetes, while 10 percent reported increased depressive symptoms and 28 percent reported elevated stress. Among subjects with diabetes, those reporting heightened stress or depression - or both - were more likely to be women, black, poor, and live in the Stroke Belt. For people with diabetes, having either

stress or depression increased their risk of death from cardiovascular disease by 53 percent, compared with diabetics without these mental health problems. Diabetics with both stress and depression had more than double the death risk.

For those without diabetes in the study, there was a trend toward a greater risk of death from cardiovascular disease when they had stress or depression but the difference between people with and without these problems wasn't big enough to rule out the possibility that it was due to chance. The study wasn't designed to prove that stress or depression cause strokes or death from cardiovascular disease. Other limitations of the study include a lack of data on how long people had diabetes, which can influence cardiovascular risk, and the potential that certain factors not measured in the study might have influenced deaths, the authors concede in Diabetes Care.

Even so, the findings point to the need for more clinicians to screen for depression and stress in primary care settings, where most people with diabetes receive care, Cummings said.

"In our culture, it's easy to be sidetracked by all the other things that we commonly think about checking when someone has diabetes, such as monitoring their blood sugars daily and taking medications, and watching for things like high blood pressure, foot sores, cholesterol, and kidney problems," said Dr Erik Vanderlip of the University of Oklahoma School of Community Medicine. "We often forget to think about depression and stress as independently contributing to heart disease through mechanisms which we haven't yet fully figured out," Vanderlip, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email. "So we rarely screen for it, or diagnose it, despite having treatments that can change it over time." —Reuters

## LOW-CARB DIET DOESN'T ALWAYS CUT DIABETES RISK AFTER PREGNANCY

**NEW YORK:** For women who develop diabetes during pregnancy, low-carbohydrate diets may not necessarily help keep the disease at bay after the baby arrives, a US study suggests. Researchers found that women eating diets high in animal proteins and low in carbs actually raised their diabetes risk. A low-carb diet that was heavy in plant-based protein and fat, in contrast, wasn't linked to an increased risk of diabetes in the study.

"Our findings suggest that sources of protein and fats should be considered for a low-carb diet as a way to control blood sugar," said lead study author Dr. Cuijin Zhang, a researcher at the National Institutes of Health in Rockville, Maryland. The researchers focused on the risk of type 2 diabetes, which is linked to obesity and aging and happens when the body can't properly use or make enough of the hormone insulin to convert blood sugar into energy.

All of the women in the study had a version of the disease while they were pregnant known as gestational diabetes, which usually disappears after delivery but significantly raises the future risk of developing type 2 diabetes. That risk appears even higher for women who cut carbs and get most of their fats and proteins from red meat and other animal sources, the study found.

"Women with a history of gestational diabetes who follow a low-carbohydrate dietary pattern may consider consuming plant sources rather than animal sources of protein and fat to minimize their future risk of type 2 diabetes," Zhang said by email. To understand how diet influences future diabetes risk, Zhang and colleagues followed about 4,500 women with a history of gestational diabetes who filled out dietary surveys starting in 1991 and continuing every four years through 2001. Based on the results, they sorted the women into five groups from lowest to highest compliance with diets centered on reducing carbohydrates and boosting proteins. Overall, women in the study with the highest compliance to the low-carb diet were 36 percent more likely to develop diabetes than those with the lowest adherence.

### Overweight or obese

The researchers also scored the diets based on how much food came from animal versus plant sources. The highest amounts of protein and fats from red meat and other animal sources were linked to a 40 percent greater diabetes risk than the lowest amounts, according to the results published in Diabetes Care. Women were more likely to be overweight or obese with the highest amounts of meat in their diets, partly explaining their increased risk, the authors note. By comparison, for women with the highest amounts of plant-based protein and fats in their diet, the increase in risk for diabetes small and might have been due to chance. It's possible that higher intake of dietary animal fat might make it harder for women to process sugar and increase their risk of diabetes, the researchers conclude.

Eating a meal rich in animal protein, compared to one heavy in protein from plants, may also lead to higher concentrations in the blood of branched-chain amino acids, protein building blocks that have been linked to an inability to process insulin and an increased diabetes risk, the authors speculate.

### Health-conscious

Women who ate the most animal-based protein and fat also tended to consume the highest amounts of red meat, a food tied to increased diabetes risk. One limitation of the current study is that dietary surveys might not accurately reflect what women ate, the authors concede.

It's also possible that more health-conscious women who see the doctor more often are more likely to get a diabetes diagnosis. Still, the findings emphasize that just because a diet is low-carb doesn't make it healthy, said Dr Deirdre Tobias, an epidemiologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard University in Boston. "A healthful combination of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and perhaps some fish or lean protein can provide a flexible road map to overall high quality eating," Tobias said by email. —Reuters



**NEPAL, Lukla:** In this photograph taken on April 28, 2015, Nepali men carry the body of an earthquake victim towards a helicopter to be evacuated from the northeastern town of Lukla.

## NEPAL QUAKE TOUGH TEST FOR 'WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS AIRPORT'

**NEPAL, Lukla:** Flying into Nepal's Lukla airport—the gateway to Mount Everest—demands courage and precision, thanks to its tiny, treacherous runway perched on a steep cliff. For half a century, pilots have needed to navigate snow-capped peaks and endure erratic weather to land on a runway just 500 meters long, which has been carved into a mountain ridge and sits by a perilous three-kilometer (two-mile) drop.

A litany of deadly crashes, including one in October 2008 which killed all 18 on board except the pilot, has earned Lukla the nickname of the "world's most dangerous airport".

But when a massive earthquake hit Nepal eight months ago, triggering Everest's deadliest avalanche and leaving hundreds of climbers and trekkers stranded, the tiny airfield faced its toughest test yet. Helicopter pilot Nischal KC told AFP that even on an average day constant "weather changes and the steep terrain sometimes make landing impossible". "It's high-stakes work and there's very little room for error," he added.

Also known as Tenzing-Hillary Airport after the first men to summit Everest, it has no radar system because of the high cost of installation, forcing officials to rely on an outdated voice communications system to track movements in the air. "The pilots tell us when they are approaching, we give them updates on wind and traffic, then as the aircraft enters Lukla valley, we warn choppers to steer clear for the landing," said air traffic controller Dinesh Koirala.

### Mass panic

Things became even tougher in the aftermath of the April 25 earthquake, which killed nearly 8,900 people across the impoverished Himalayan nation. Rescue pilots seeking to reach Everest base camp, where an avalanche set off by the 7.8-magnitude quake killed 18 people, were held back for a day because of hostile weather. When they were finally able to fly, rippling aftershocks brought the threat of further damage.

"Aftershocks kept coming that day but I was more stressed out by the weather. I knew that unless it cleared up, we could not send any choppers to rescue people injured by the avalanche," air traffic controller Koirala told AFP. Pilot KC, who has been flying in the Everest region for 14 years, recalls starting the day with a prayer. "My first priority was to get the injured out of base camp but people higher up the mountain were panicking because of all the aftershocks," the Manang Air pilot said.

He made dozens of trips that day to rescue terrified climbers desperate to get off the mountain, and to base camp to rescue the injured. The frequency of aftershocks and the precarious terrain made landing even more difficult than usual, prompting the pilots to hover overhead and haul climbers up with ropes instead. As rescuers carried dozens of quake victims into Lukla on sleeping bags doubling as stretchers, the tiny airport began to swell with hundreds of tourists haggling with airline officials for a ticket out.

Back in the control tower, Koirala and his colleagues embarked on the busiest week of their lives, closely monitoring the movement of planes and helicopters to ensure no accidents occurred mid-air. "The whole week was a blur of flights—the fact that there were so many more aircraft than usual in the air made the job very stressful," Koirala said.

### Edmund Hillary

Prior to the airport's construction in 1964, porters would spend days walking from Kathmandu to Lukla, carrying hundreds of kilos of expedition gear on their backs. Mountaineering legend Edmund Hillary originally planned to build the airfield on flat ground—but local farmers refused to part with their fertile land. Undeterred, he purchased a steep slope for \$635 and recruited scores of Sherpa villagers to cut down scrub with knives. The climber then plied villagers with local liquor and asked them to perform a foot-stomping traditional dance to flatten the land. "A very festive mood prevailed and the earth received a most resounding thumping."

Two days of this rather reduced the Sherpas' enthusiasm for the dance but produced a firm and smooth surface for our airfield," Hillary wrote in his 1998 memoir, "View from the Summit". As the number of climbers taking on the world's highest mountain has boomed in recent decades, so traffic at Lukla airport—which can be accessed by helicopter or small aircraft—has increased. Spring and autumn tourist seasons are the busiest, but closures are common since clear skies are essential for safe landing on the abbreviated cliff-top runway. Despite the challenges, some say its reputation for danger is undeserved. "It's unfair to call Lukla the most dangerous airport when there's not much we can do about the terrain or the weather," said Koirala. "I have no doubt many lives were saved because this airport remained open after the quake." —AFP



**FORKS, United States:** An Ochre sea star (*Pisaster ochraceus*), also called starfish, is seen in the tidepools of Kalaloch Beach 3 in the Olympic National Park, near Forks, Washington, in this file photo. —AFP photos



**FORKS, United States:** Ochre sea stars (*Pisaster ochraceus*), also called starfish, are seen in the tidepools of Kalaloch Beach.

## IS CLIMATE CHANGE KILLING AMERICAN STARFISH?

**FORKS, United States:** On the remote rocky shores of the western United States, low tide brings visitors to wave-splashed tide pools to marvel at ocean wonders usually hidden from view. But recently, largely missing from the bounty are the biggest draw: a rainbow-hued array of starfish. "I don't know what you would call it other than catastrophic," says Drew Harvell, a biologist at Cornell University, describing what is widely regarded as one of the worst marine disease events ever recorded. "It's staggering, really, the millions of stars that have died. It is not apocalyptic or extreme to say that."

In recent years, millions of the starfish, also called sea stars, have had their legs curl up and pull away from their bodies, breaking the animals to pieces before they turn to mush, often in a matter of days. Scientists have been left racing to figure out why. Once densely packed onto the rocks and on the ocean floor, the key predators are simply missing from some locations, their numbers cut by 95 percent or more. The phenomenon, called Sea Star Wasting Syndrome, was first noticed by rangers in Olympic National Park in Washington state in 2013. It has now been documented from California to Alaska, and led to die-off that is bigger and more widely spread than any seen before. Late last year, a

group of researchers published findings in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences saying they had found strong evidence that a virus was causing the disease.

Researchers now are looking into why the virus is suddenly so much more widespread and deadly. A primary consideration is how warmer water, brought about by climate change, is affecting the stars, the virus and the wider ecosystem. "There are components that certainly track with temperature," Harvell said. "We think the magnitude in our waters is due to temperature. We know that under warmer conditions, they die faster." "We've had anomalously warm oceans for the last two years. Really, what we would call hot water. It is really the dominant thing to consider," she said.

### Data collection difficult

A primary challenge for researchers is simply the massive amount of data needed to get a good understanding of what is happening. The animals are found on thousands and thousands of miles of coastline, and sufficient funding is simply not available to thoroughly count them and consider all the possible variables. But scientists are nevertheless trying. They are tracking the numbers of stars in loca-

tions over time, gauging the temperature and chemistry of the water, and logging the data as part of ongoing research into the ecosystem. They are even recruiting "citizen scientists" to help search for the stars and record their condition.

Melissa Miner, a researcher with the University of California at Santa Cruz, is one of the people leading the data collection, but said the widespread nature of the outbreak adds to the challenge. "It is pretty difficult to collect the data we need on a big scale," she said. "I really want to stress that it isn't understood at all what it is causing this disease." Harvell agreed that money for the extensive research is scarce. It doesn't help that the starfish are not an animal humans eat, and thus there is no industry raising the alarm about their decline. "Out of sight, out of mind," she said. "We need to be concerned about the health of our oceans. We could be so much farther ahead if there had been enough money available."

Congressman Denny Heck, whose district in Washington state includes much of the inland waters where starfish have been dying off in huge numbers, is trying to help by establishing a framework for declaring a marine disease emergency. Such a declaration would come with money for

research and possible recovery. "When disease like this breaks out underwater, we have no established process to stop it," Heck told AFP. He has found allies on both coasts, as well as among his fellow Democrats and Republicans, as a disease outbreak could hit fisheries and devastate a local economy, but is not optimistic about the chances of his bill in the Republican-led Congress.

"When I'm home in Washington state, the effects of climate change are all too real. Our salmon are dying due to higher water temperatures, the snowpack at Mount Rainier is disappearing, our waters are becoming more polluted, and the increasingly dry, hot summers are causing massive forest fires," Heck said. But he says when once back in the US capital, "the same concerns seem to be absent among the (Republican)-controlled Congress, even though I know the communities they represent also have evidence of a serious problem. The urgency from the majority party to deal with these problems just isn't there." For her part, Miner is hopeful that the colorful sea stars have a high enough profile to draw attention to their demise. "They are as charismatic as you can be as an intertidal species," she said. "They are what connects people to ocean. The sea star is kind of the mascot of the intertidal." —AFP



Asma Lootah

## MAKEUP AND SKIN CARE EXPERT ASMA LOOTAH REVEALS HER SECRETS ABOUT BEAUTY

**Y**ou lift me up, you make me look alive and you give me definition - could Mascara really be a girl's first love? Maybe that's taking it a bit too far, but it is an essential part of our daily make-up kit and according to a report, the average woman spends almost \$4,000 on mascara in a lifetime. Remember all those mornings with only a few minutes to transform from "I haven't slept" to "I could conquer the world"? If you have, then you are going to love these hacks on how to best apply mascara including the toughest part, removing it.

### Tips on how to apply mascara:

- Cleanse your face
- Cleansing your face before applying any makeup is essential to obtain a fresh and radiant look. NIVEA Face Care offers a wide range of cleansers to make sure your skin is fresh and healthy looking includ-

ing: NIVEA Double Effect Eye Make-Up Remover, Face Wash, Scrubs, Cleansing Wipes, Milks & Toners.

- Bend the brush of the mascara wand to make life easier

Bend the tip of the brush so it's perpendicular to the handle. It will make the brush easier to use and let you reach the harder areas (inner corners of the eyes)

- Put your tube of mascara in a cup of hot water to make the formula thinner and less clumpy

Soak the tube in a small cup of hot water and apply with ease.

- Wiggle the brush back and forth on the base of your lashes

The best way to curlier, thicker lashes is to apply a thicker coat of mascara at the roots of your lasher with a lighter one on the ends

- Brush baby powder over your eye-lashes for fuller lashes

Dust a little baby powder on your lashes in between your first and second coat of mascara for plumper lashes.

- Use a toothbrush to de-clump your lashes after using mascara

Comb your lashes with a clean, new toothbrush to give you clump-free, even and flawless eyes.

### Tips on how to remove your mascara:

No more scrubbing: Always be gentle! The skin around your eyes is extremely sensitive so never rub them harshly, as this could cause irritation. Instead gently massage around your eyes and lashes in a circular motion.

- Use a hot wash cloth to loosen mascara

Run your washcloth under hot water for a few seconds and place it over your eyes. This will loosen the mascara and make it easier to remove.



# CLINIC PAGE



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## LULU HYPERMARKET LAUNCHES CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL 2015

Lulu Hypermarket, one of the leading hypermarkets for shopping delights, is sweetening up its December deals with its 'Chocolate Festival 2015', a promotion of the smoothest, lightest and creamiest chocolates at great prices.

The promotion was inaugurated by Muhammed Haris, Regional Director in the presence of LuLu management and well-wishers on 3 December at the Hypermarket's Al-Rai outlet. Adding its own saccharine goodness to the function was the 15 meter chocolate train that was a dazzling sight.

The chocolate promotion, running from 2 December to 12 December in all LuLu Hypermarket outlets, has a wide variety of chocolate offerings to tantalize your sweet tooth. With delectable combinations of regular and branded chocolates on sale, the festival is a highly desirable event for all chocolate enthusiasts, particularly those seeking new favorite sweets.

LuLu Hypermarket is well-known for its great promotional deals and grand fests that create exciting experiences for consumers. The hypermarket is at the forefront of retail excellence, stocking the best products at competitive prices, and is known for the innovative ways in which it interacts and delights customers.



## LOYAC ORGANIZES VOLUNTEER OPEN DAY

On the occasion of the International Volunteer Day, LOYAC organized a volunteer open day, on Saturday at its headquarters in Al-Qibla school, with the participation of the Kuwaiti Society for the Handicapped and Kuwaiti artists whom have painted reused oil barrels for the peace campaign #PEACEOFART which aims to generate funds through an auction and give the pro-

ceeds to charity for the relief of Arab children in war stricken countries. The event included live music and food stations, sponsored by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC).

On this occasion, Fari'a Ahmad Al-Saqaf, LOYAC Chairwoman, confirmed that the celebration of the International volunteer Day is an honor for individuals, governmental and non-governmental organizations working in

this field, and to promote community awareness of the importance of voluntary social humanitarian work.

Al-Saqaf noted that LOYAC offers many volunteer programs that aim to aware of the value of volunteer work, including "volunteer is my happiness" program, which aims to volunteer in helping and give service to disabilities and hospital patients, in collaboration

with the various volunteer centers in Kuwait, including Kuwait Society for the Welfare of the Disabled, the caring for the elderly and orphans' and the Children's Hospital of cancer. And it offers also the "homes" program which aims to renovate the homes of the needy families in Kuwait, Lebanon, Jordan and Yemen.

Meanwhile, Munira Al-Mutawa, Founder of

the Kuwaiti Society for the Handicapped, was pleased to share LOYAC the celebration of the International Volunteer Day. Believing that volunteering has a humanitarian goals for charity; and that is an opportunity for volunteer organizations and companies that encourage volunteerism and individual volunteers to enhance its contribution to the development at the global and local levels.



## 'SHOP BAHRAIN' ANNOUNCES 2015 DATES FROM KUWAIT

The second edition of Bahrain Shopping Festival, 'Shop Bahrain', is set to be the largest nationwide festival with a unique 30-day celebration of Bahrain's heritage, hospitality and tourism offering for the entire family running from December 24th 2015 until 23rd January 2016. The announcement was made today during a press conference held at Jumeirah Messilah Beach in Kuwait.

Shop Bahrain will mirror the Kingdom's position as a welcoming, accessible, family destination

with an incredibly diverse range of retail experiences from luxury malls to traditional souks to luxury boutiques coupled with unbeatable bargains and promotions.

"Our key focus is to attract visitors from the Gulf region. We look forward to welcoming visitors to the Kingdom and encourage them to spend a few extra days to enjoy our exciting line-up of events which embodies the spirit of fun and celebration," said Shop Bahrain Director, Nawaf Al-Koheji.

Shop Bahrain brings together an exciting calendar of events including 'VIVA Shop and Skate', the largest outdoor ice-skating skating rink in the GCC region housed outside Al 'Ali Shopping Complex. The event is dubbed to be 'one that the family can enjoy' and will feature a shopping bazaar and other special attractions during the weekend.

"The Family Fair", a two-day carnival held during the New Year's Eve Weekend at Prince Khalifa bin Salman Park, will bring together an array of fun

family activities. The festival, held on 31st December 2015 and 1st January 2016, will feature games, entertainment activities and mouth-watering cuisine.

'Shop Bahrain' will also witness the comeback of the much-awaited Al Riwaq's 'The Nest', a local bazaar showcasing the latest talents from Bahrain and the region, in addition to 'The Taste Tour' held in Block 338, Adliya.

Other fun-filled attractions include in-mall activities such as Bungee Jumping held in Al 'Ali

Shopping Complex, a cinema event dedicated for children as well as the 'Kamikaze Fireflies' show among other entertainment activities. A weekly and grand raffle draw will also be held offering visitors and residents the opportunity to win big and amazing prizes.

Shoppers and visitors can find out the latest information about Shop Bahrain through the festival's website [www.shopbahrain.com](http://www.shopbahrain.com) or by following any of its social media channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube @shopbahrain.



## CAN RECOGNIZES VIVA

Cancer Aware Nation (CAN) recognized VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, for sponsoring the Marathon held on last Saturday. Ayman Salem Al-Mutairi, Senior Manager Public Relations at VIVA, received the trophy from CAN's representative, Dr Rashid Al-Hamad, after the marathon. VIVA has announced last week its sponsorship for this event that combines between health and sport that meets its CSR plans, as it's always keen to support different activities that aim to serve the society and spread the awareness among its members. VIVA's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities can be reviewed on the company's website at <https://www.viva.com.kw/csr>. This offers a description of each CSR initiative that VIVA has supported, or taken on since its inception.



Promoting health awareness and encouraging healthy lifestyle are part of the activities of Cancer Awareness Nation (CAN), which organized a marathon on Friday that ended at the Green Island. Several establishments sponsored the event including Al-Sanabel Al-Thahabiya and its principal Sebamed.

**Discovery Channel HD**

00:20 Fast N' Loud  
 01:10 Facing Extinction  
 02:50 Wheeler Dealers  
 03:40 Auction Hunters  
 04:05 Property Wars  
 04:30 Storage Hunters UK  
 05:00 America  
 05:30 How It's Made  
 06:00 Ice Lake Rebels  
 06:50 Desert Car Kings  
 07:40 Fast N' Loud  
 08:30 Auction Hunters  
 08:55 Property Wars  
 09:20 Storage Hunters UK  
 09:45 America  
 10:10 How It's Made  
 10:35 Misfit Garage  
 11:25 Wheeler Dealers  
 12:15 Cuban Chrome  
 13:05 Auction Hunters  
 13:30 Property Wars  
 13:55 Storage Hunters UK  
 14:20 Ice Lake Rebels  
 15:10 Desert Car Kings  
 16:00 Fast N' Loud  
 16:50 America  
 17:15 How It's Made  
 17:40 Deadliest Catch  
 18:30 Outback Truckers  
 19:20 Outback Truckers  
 20:10 Property Wars  
 20:35 Storage Hunters UK  
 21:00 Deadliest Catch  
 21:50 Outback Truckers  
 22:40 Manhunt With Joel Lambert  
 23:30 Desert Car Kings

18:40 First Class Chefs  
 19:05 H2O: Just Add Water  
 19:30 Violetta  
 20:20 The Next Step  
 20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
 21:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
 22:00 Binny And The Ghost  
 22:25 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 22:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 23:10 Wolfblood  
 23:35 Wolfblood

04:30 Jenny Morris Cooks The Riviera  
 05:00 Chopped  
 06:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
 07:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
 08:00 Chopped  
 09:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
 10:00 The Kitchen  
 11:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
 12:00 Chopped  
 13:00 Guy's Big Bite  
 13:30 Guy's Big Bite  
 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
 15:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
 15:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
 16:00 Chopped  
 17:00 The Kitchen  
 18:00 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy  
 18:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook  
 19:00 Chopped  
 20:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
 21:00 Food Court Wars  
 22:00 Mystery Diners  
 22:30 Mystery Diners  
 23:00 Ching's Restaurant

Table  
 04:20 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
 05:10 David Rocco's Dolce India  
 06:00 Hook It, Cook It  
 06:25 A Marriage Of Flavours  
 06:50 The Food Files  
 07:15 Exploring The Vine  
 07:40 Food School  
 08:05 The Food Files  
 08:30 East Bites West With Chef Wan  
 08:55 Cruise Ship Diaries  
 09:45 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 10:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
 11:00 David Rocco's Dolce India  
 11:50 Hook It, Cook It  
 12:15 A Marriage Of Flavours  
 12:40 Exploring The Vine  
 13:35 Food School  
 14:00 The Food Files  
 14:30 Street Food Around The World  
 15:25 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 16:20 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
 17:15 David Rocco's Dolce India  
 18:10 Food School  
 18:35 A Marriage Of Flavours  
 19:05 Street Food Around The World  
 19:30 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 20:25 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
 21:15 David Rocco's Dolce India  
 22:05 Food School  
 22:30 A Marriage Of Flavours

**Discovery Science**

00:35 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
 03:42 Mighty Ships  
 04:29 Food Factory  
 04:52 Food Factory  
 05:16 Home Factory  
 05:39 Home Factory  
 06:03 How The Universe Works  
 06:50 The Supernaturalist  
 07:37 Deadliest Space Weather  
 08:00 How It's Made  
 08:23 Mythbusters  
 09:08 How The Universe Works  
 09:53 Building The Biggest  
 10:38 How It's Made  
 11:00 How It's Made  
 11:23 Mighty Ships  
 12:08 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
 12:53 Building The Biggest  
 13:38 Mythbusters  
 14:23 How It's Made  
 14:46 How It's Made  
 15:10 How The Universe Works  
 15:57 Mighty Ships  
 16:44 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
 17:31 Building The Biggest  
 18:18 How The Universe Works  
 19:05 Mythbusters  
 19:50 Home Factory  
 20:15 Home Factory  
 20:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
 21:25 How It's Made  
 21:50 How It's Made  
 22:15 How The Universe Works  
 23:00 Home Factory  
 23:45 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

00:00 Nina Needs To Go  
 00:05 Henry Hugglemonster  
 00:20 Calimero  
 00:35 Zou  
 00:50 Loopdidoo  
 01:05 Art Attack  
 01:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
 01:45 Calimero  
 02:00 Zou  
 02:15 Loopdidoo  
 02:30 Art Attack  
 02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
 03:05 Calimero  
 03:20 Zou  
 03:30 Loopdidoo  
 03:45 Art Attack  
 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
 04:20 Calimero  
 04:35 Zou  
 04:45 Loopdidoo  
 05:00 Art Attack  
 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
 05:35 Calimero  
 05:50 Zou  
 06:00 Loopdidoo  
 06:15 Art Attack  
 06:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
 06:50 Calimero  
 07:00 Zou  
 07:20 Loopdidoo  
 07:35 Art Attack  
 08:00 Calimero  
 08:10 Zou  
 08:25 Limon And Oli  
 08:35 Jake And The Neverland Pirates  
 09:05 Sofia The First  
 09:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
 10:30 Doc McStuffins  
 11:00 Sofia The First  
 11:30 Captain Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
 11:55 Miles From Tomorrow  
 12:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
 12:55 Loopdidoo  
 13:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
 13:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
 14:00 Sofia The First  
 14:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
 14:45 Calimero  
 15:00 Doc McStuffins  
 15:30 Zou  
 15:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
 16:15 Sofia The First  
 16:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
 17:10 Aladdin  
 17:40 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears  
 18:10 Chip N Dale Rescue Rangers  
 18:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
 18:55 Cars Toons  
 19:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
 19:30 Sofia The First

01:05 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
 02:00 Emmerdale  
 02:25 Coronation Street  
 03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
 04:20 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
 05:15 Come Date With Me Australia  
 06:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
 07:05 Coronation Street  
 07:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
 08:25 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
 09:20 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover  
 10:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
 11:05 Dancing On The Edge  
 12:30 Come Date With Me Australia  
 13:25 Emmerdale  
 13:50 Coach Trip  
 14:20 Coronation Street  
 14:45 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover  
 15:35 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
 16:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
 17:25 The Jonathan Ross Show  
 18:20 Come Date With Me Australia  
 18:45 Come Date With Me Australia  
 19:10 Coronation Street  
 19:35 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
 20:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
 21:25 The Jonathan Ross Show  
 22:20 Coronation Street  
 22:50 Emmerdale  
 23:15 Coach Trip  
 23:40 Dancing On The Edge

**NAT GEO WILD HD**

00:20 Monster Fish  
 01:10 Cameramen Who Dare  
 02:00 Ultimate Predator  
 02:50 The Great Serengeti  
 03:45 Wild Australia  
 04:40 World's Deadliest  
 05:35 Ultimate Predator  
 06:30 The Great Serengeti  
 07:25 Night Stalkers  
 08:20 Ultimate Honey Badger  
 09:15 World's Wildest Encounters  
 10:10 Wild Australia  
 11:05 Bizarre Dinos  
 12:00 Shark Gangs  
 12:55 Africa's Deadliest  
 13:50 72 Dangerous Animals Australia  
 14:45 Wild Australia  
 15:40 Caught In The Act  
 16:35 Bearhood  
 17:30 The Dark Side Of Hippos  
 18:25 Wild Case Files  
 19:20 Wild Australia  
 20:10 Caught In The Act  
 21:00 Bearhood  
 21:50 The Dark Side Of Hippos  
 22:40 Wild Case Files

**OSN FIRST HD COMEDY**

00:30 Hot In Cleveland  
 01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
 02:00 Silicon Valley  
 02:30 You're The Worst  
 03:00 Merry Me  
 03:30 2 Broke Girls  
 04:00 The Goldbergs  
 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 05:30 Last Man Standing  
 06:00 I Hate My Teenage Daughter  
 06:30 My Name Is Earl  
 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
 08:00 The Goldbergs  
 08:30 Last Man Standing  
 09:00 Merry Me  
 10:00 My Name Is Earl  
 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
 12:00 I Hate My Teenage Daughter  
 13:00 \$#! My Dad Says  
 13:30 Last Man Standing  
 14:00 My Name Is Earl  
 14:30 2 Broke Girls  
 15:30 Hot In Cleveland  
 16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
 16:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter  
 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
 18:00 Merry Me  
 18:30 2 Broke Girls  
 19:00 About A Boy  
 19:30 Last Man On Earth  
 20:00 Community  
 20:30 Men At Work  
 21:00 Hot In Cleveland  
 21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore  
 22:00 Getting On  
 22:30 Togetherness  
 23:00 You're The Worst

00:00 Violetta  
 00:45 The Hive  
 00:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 01:40 Wolfblood  
 02:30 Violetta  
 03:15 The Hive  
 03:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 04:10 Wolfblood  
 05:00 Violetta  
 05:45 The Hive  
 05:50 Mouk  
 06:00 Lolirock  
 06:25 Hank Zipzer  
 06:50 Girl Meets World  
 07:15 H2O: Just Add Water  
 08:05 Austin & Ally  
 08:55 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 09:20 Violetta Recipes  
 09:35 Frozen Fever  
 09:45 Jessie  
 10:10 The Naughty List  
 11:20 Frozen In Time  
 12:20 Hank Zipzer  
 12:45 Didn't Do It  
 13:10 Didn't Do It  
 13:35 Liv And Maddie  
 14:00 Liv And Maddie  
 14:30 H2O: Just Add Water  
 14:55 First Class Chefs  
 15:20 A.N.T. Farm  
 15:45 A.N.T. Farm  
 16:10 Violetta  
 17:00 The Next Step  
 17:25 Mako Mermaids  
 17:50 Girl Meets World  
 18:15 Dog With A Blog

00:00 The Soup  
 00:30 WAGs  
 01:25 Sex With Brody  
 01:50 The Grace Helbig Show  
 02:20 E! News  
 03:15 Extreme Close-Up  
 04:10 Beyond Candid With Giuliana  
 05:05 E! Entertainment Special  
 06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
 06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
 07:50 Style Star  
 08:20 E! News  
 09:15 Giuliana & Bill  
 11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
 12:05 E! News  
 13:05 The Grace Helbig Show  
 14:05 Hollywood Cycle  
 15:00 Courtney And Khloe Take The Hamptons  
 17:00 Stewart's And Hamiltons  
 18:00 E! News  
 19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
 20:00 House Of DVF  
 21:00 Christina Milian Turned Up  
 22:00 WAGs

00:10 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South  
 01:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
 02:00 China's Grand Canal: Photographer's Journey  
 02:55 Yukon Gold  
 03:50 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South  
 04:45 Strippers: Cars For Cash  
 05:40 Sea Patrol  
 06:35 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
 07:30 Seconds From Disaster  
 08:25 Years Of Living Dangerously  
 09:20 Strippers: Cars For Cash  
 10:15 Car SOS  
 11:10 Yukon Gold  
 12:05 Yukon Gold  
 13:00 Years Of Living Dangerously  
 14:00 Seconds From Disaster  
 15:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
 16:00 Car SOS  
 17:00 Yukon Gold  
 19:00 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey  
 20:00 Drugs Inc Compilations  
 20:50 Yukon Gold  
 22:30 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
 23:20 Sea Patrol

**NAT GEO people HD**

00:10 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
 00:35 Food School  
 01:00 The Food Files  
 01:25 Exploring The Vine  
 01:50 Food School  
 02:15 The Food Files  
 02:40 East Bites West With Chef Wan  
 03:05 Cruise Ship Diaries  
 03:55 Valentine Warner's Wild

**OSN FIRST HD**

00:00 Bates Motel  
 01:00 Scandal  
 02:00 How To Get Away With Murder  
 03:00 The Knick  
 04:00 Franklin & Bash  
 05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 06:00 Unforgettable  
 07:00 Franklin & Bash  
 08:00 Graceland  
 09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 10:00 Unforgettable  
 11:00 Franklin & Bash



A STRANGER IN PARADISE ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

12:00 Emmerdale  
 12:30 Coronation Street  
 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 14:00 Graceland  
 15:00 Unforgettable  
 16:00 Emmerdale  
 16:30 Coronation Street  
 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 18:00 Graceland

**OSN FIRST MORE**

00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 01:00 Chicago Fire  
 02:00 Good Morning America  
 03:00 Tyrant  
 04:00 Helix  
 05:00 Chicago Fire  
 06:00 Good Morning America  
 07:00 Emmerdale  
 07:30 Coronation Street  
 08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 09:00 Royal Pains  
 10:00 Emmerdale  
 10:30 Coronation Street  
 11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
 12:00 Castle  
 13:00 Once Upon A Time  
 14:00 Royal Pains  
 15:00 Live Good Morning America  
 17:00 Castle  
 18:00 Once Upon A Time  
 19:00 Red Band Society

**OSN MOVIES ACTION**

00:00 Predator-PG15  
 02:00 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15  
 03:30 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire-PG15  
 06:00 Arachnophobia-PG15  
 08:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra-PG15  
 10:00 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15  
 12:00 Jurassic Attack-PG15  
 14:00 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire-PG15  
 16:30 Android Cop-PG15  
 20:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief  
 22:00 The Day

08:00 Arachnophobia  
 10:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra  
 12:00 A Stranger In Paradise  
 14:00 Jurassic Attack  
 16:00 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire  
 18:30 Android Cop  
 20:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief  
 22:00 The Day

**OSN MOVIES HD ACTION**

00:00 Predator-PG15  
 02:00 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15  
 03:30 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire-PG15  
 06:00 Arachnophobia-PG15  
 08:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra-PG15  
 10:00 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15  
 12:00 Jurassic Attack-PG15  
 14:00 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire-PG15  
 16:30 Android Cop-PG15  
 20:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief-PG15  
 22:00 The Day-PG15  
 23:00 Combustion-18

13:00 Parkland-PG15  
 15:00 Le Weekend-PG15  
 17:00 How To Train Your Dragon 2  
 19:00 Serena-PG15  
 21:00 About Alex-PG15  
 23:00 Lost In The Cloud-18

**OSN MOVIES KIDS**

01:00 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants  
 04:30 Hiroku: Defenders Of Gaia  
 06:00 Marco Macaco  
 08:00 Cher Ami  
 10:00 The Elf Who Stole Christmas  
 11:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure  
 14:30 Miffy The Movie  
 16:00 Jungle Shuffle  
 18:00 The Elf Who Stole Christmas  
 20:00 Ploddy Police Car On The Case  
 22:00 Miffy The Movie  
 23:30 Jungle Shuffle

**OSN MOVIES PREMIERE**

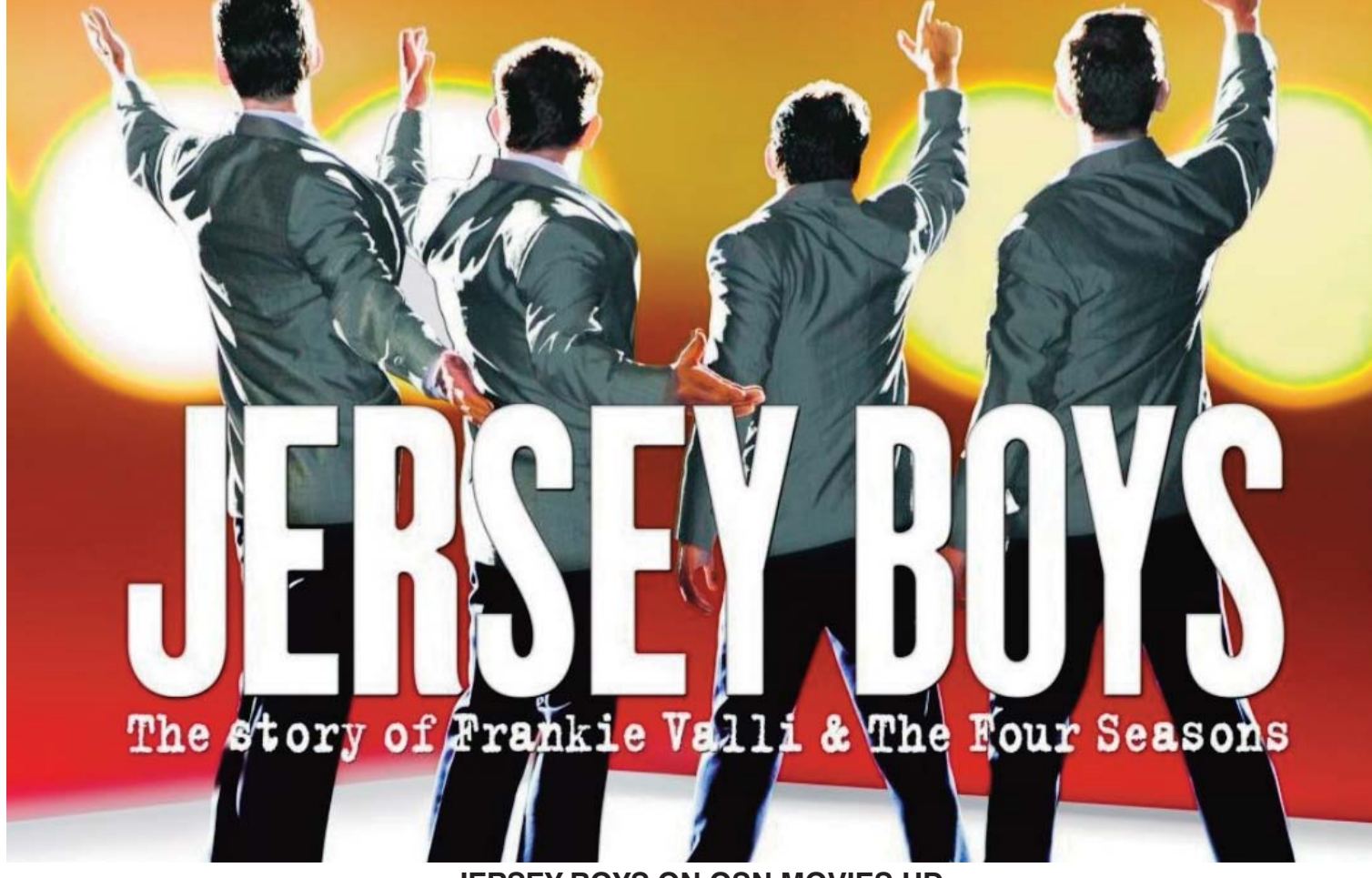
00:00 Deliverance Creek-PG15  
 01:45 Sailing-PG15  
 04:00 Heaven's Door-PG  
 06:00 Trigger Point-PG15  
 08:00 Closed Circuit-PG15  
 10:00 HairBrained-PG15  
 12:00 Schuk's Your Country Needs You-PG15  
 13:45 Get On Up-PG15  
 16:15 Closed Circuit-PG15  
 18:00 Chef-PG15  
 20:00 Snowpiercer-PG15  
 22:00 Rush-18

**AMC**

01:40 Duplex  
 03:15 Cannon For Cordoba  
 05:00 Saved!  
 06:30 Apache  
 08:00 One Summer Love  
 09:40 Bound For Glory  
 12:05 Big Screen  
 12:20 Brannigan  
 14:10 The Adventures Of Buckaroo Banzai  
 15:50 American Rhapsody  
 17:35 Apache  
 19:05 Death Rides A Horse  
 21:00 Improptu  
 22:45 Hurly Burly

**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

00:50 Gator Boys  
 01:45 Call Of The Wildman  
 02:15 Call Of The Wildman  
 02:40 Bondi Vet  
 03:35 Tanked  
 04:25 Ten Deadliest Snakes  
 05:15 Gator Boys  
 06:02 Treehouse Masters  
 06:49 Gangland Killers  
 07:36 Call Of The Wildman  
 08:00 Call Of The Wildman  
 08:25 Glory Hounds  
 10:10 Treehouse Masters  
 11:05 Tanked  
 12:00 Dog Rescuers  
 12:30 Dog Rescuers  
 12:55 Bondi Vet  
 13:50 Bondi Vet  
 14:45 Ten Deadliest Snakes  
 15:40 Treehouse Masters  
 16:35 Tanked  
 17:30 Gangland Killers  
 18:25 Monster Croc Invasion  
 19:20 Biggest And Baddest  
 20:15 Tanked  
 21:10 Sharwari: A Wild Life  
 21:35 Sharwari: A Wild Life  
 22:05 Treehouse Masters  
 23:00 Biggest And Baddest  
 23:55 Whale Wars



JERSEY BOYS ON OSN MOVIES HD

**OSN MOVIES DRAMA**

01:30 The Railway Man-PG15  
 03:00 Miss Meadows-PG15  
 05:00 Suspension Of Disbelief-PG15  
 07:00 Stash House-PG15  
 09:00 Second Coming-PG15  
 11:00 The Giver-PG15  
 13:00 The Dependables-PG15  
 15:00 Belle-PG15  
 17:00 Second Coming-PG15  
 19:00 Hours-PG15  
 21:00 Blue Ruin-PG15  
 23:00 Plus One-18

**OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL**

02:30 Upside Down  
 04:30 Siberian Education  
 06:30 The Man Who Would Be King  
 09:00 The Nightmare Before Christmas  
 11:00 Mr. Pip  
 13:00 Against The Ropes  
 15:00 Sunshine On Leith  
 17:00 The Nightmare Before Christmas  
 19:00 Blue Sky  
 21:00 The Alamo  
 23:15 The Master

**OSN MOVIES HD**

01:00 Laggies-PG15  
 03:00 Paranoia-PG15  
 05:00 Northpole-PG  
 06:45 Jersey Boys-PG15  
 09:00 How To Train Your Dragon 2  
 10:45 Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes-PG15

00:00 Live MSNBC Caught On Camera  
 01:00 Live MSNBC Caught On Camera  
 02:00 Live ABC World News  
 02:30 Live NBC Nightly News  
 04:00 NBC Sunday Today Show  
 05:00 ABC This Week With G Stephanopoulos  
 06:00 NBC Meet The Press  
 07:00 ABC World News  
 07:30 NBC Nightly News  
 08:00 ABC World News  
 08:30 NBC Nightly News  
 09:00 ABC This Week With G Stephanopoulos  
 10:00 ABC World News  
 10:30 NBC Nightly News  
 11:00 Live ABC World News Now  
 11:30 Live ABC World News Now  
 12:00 Live NBC Early Today  
 12:30 Live ABC America This Morning  
 13:00 Live ABC America This Morning  
 13:30 Live ABC America This Morning  
 14:00 Live ABC America This Morning  
 15:00 MSNBC First Look  
 15:30 Live NBC Today Show  
 19:00 Live MSNBC Live With Tamron Hall  
 20:00 Live MSNBC Andrea Mitchell Reports  
 21:00 Live MSNBC Live With Thomas Roberts  
 23:00 Live MSNBC Live With Kate Snow

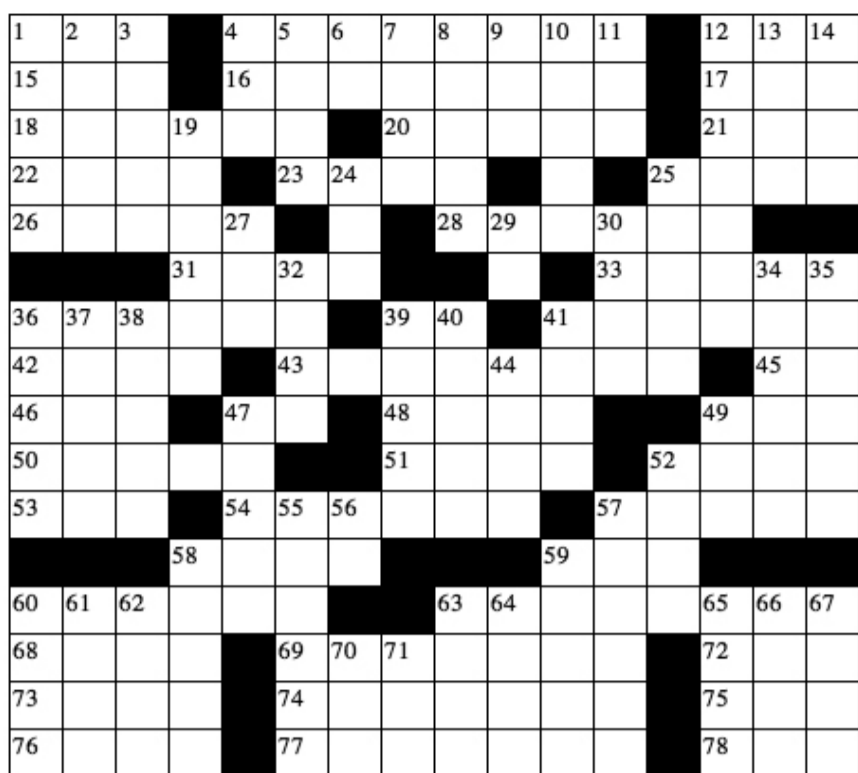
**BBC entertainment**

00:25 Eastenders  
 00:55 Upstairs Downstairs  
 01:50 The Paradise  
 02:45 The Paradise  
 03:40 Friday Night Dinner  
 04:05 The Cafe  
 04:30 Only Fools And Horses  
 05:00 Teletubbies  
 05:25 The Green Balloon Club  
 05:45 Gogglebizz  
 06:00 Teletubbies  
 06:25 The Green Balloon Club  
 06:50 Gogglebizz  
 07:05 Woolly & Tig  
 07:10 The Weakest Link  
 07:55 My Hero  
 08:25 Doctors  
 08:55 Eastenders  
 09:25 Upstairs Downstairs  
 10:20 Outcasts  
 11:15 The Weakest Link  
 12:00 Blackadder II  
 12:30 My Hero  
 13:00 Upstairs Downstairs  
 13:55 Outcasts  
 14:50 Blackadder II  
 15:20 My Hero  
 15:50 Doctors  
 16:20 Eastenders  
 16:50 The Weakest Link  
 17:35 Blackadder II





CROSSWORD 1102



ACROSS

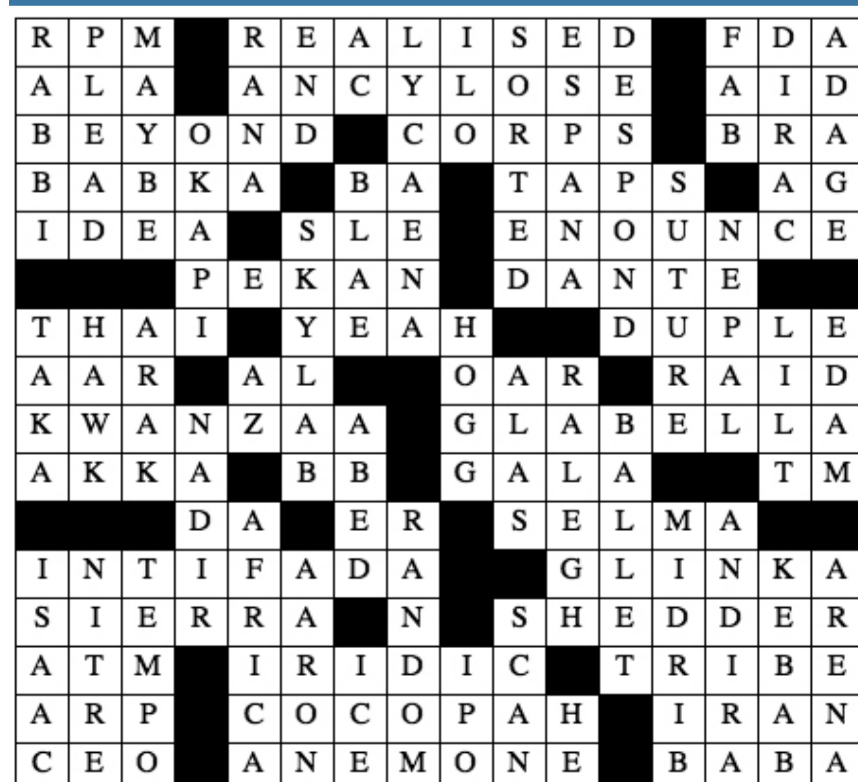
1. A male human offspring.
4. The possibility of future success.
12. A sharp hand gesture (resembling a blow).
15. The unit of frequency.
16. Gregarious burrowing rodent larger than the chinchillas.
17. Fiddler crabs.
18. 40th President of the United States (1911).
20. (medicine) Chilly.
21. The habitation of wild animals.
22. An elaborate song for solo voice.
23. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
26. A genus of Ploceidae.
28. An overland journey by hunters (especially in Africa).
31. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
33. A Portuguese province on the south coast of China and two islands in the South China Sea.
36. The quarter of many North African cities in which the citadel is located.
42. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
43. City in central Iran.
45. Being ten more than one hundred forty.
46. A reptile genus of Iguanidae.
48. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
50. Done or occurring in a brief period of time.
51. City in southwestern Colombia in a rich agricultural area.
53. A strong emotion.
54. Submit or yield to another's wish or opinion.
60. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
68. A program under which employees regularly accumulate shares and may ultimately assume control of the company.
69. The largest island of the central Ryukyu Islands.
72. (informal) Roused to anger.
73. Port city that is the capital and largest city of Latvia.
74. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
75. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
76. An organic compound that contains a hydroxyl group bonded to a carbon atom which in turn is doubly bonded to another carbon atom.
77. Low spreading tropical American shrub with long slender leaves used to make a mildly stimulating drink resembling tea.
78. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).

DOWN

1. Disposed of as useless.
2. A drama set to music.
3. An anti-inflammatory drug that does not contain steroids.
4. A vinyl polymer used especially in paints or adhesives.
5. The tissue forming the hard outer layer of e.g. a fruit.
6. A mouth or mouthlike opening.

7. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
8. East Indian tree bearing a profusion of intense vermilion velvet-textured blooms and yielding a yellow dye.
9. A graphical recording of the cardiac cycle produced by an electrocardiograph.
10. Most important element.
11. A slight amount or degree of difference.
12. Historical and literary materials relating to Judaism.
13. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
14. An unofficial association of people or groups.
19. A member of an agricultural people in southeastern India.
24. A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
25. An ancient city in northern Portugal.
27. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
29. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
30. A primeval personification of air and breath.
32. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
34. Verse in the meter used in Greek and Latin poetry consisting of strophes of 4 tetrametric lines.
35. A transmission from Earth to a spacecraft or the path of such a transmission.
37. The table in Christian churches where communion is given.
38. Erect leafless flower stalk growing directly from the ground as in a tulip.
39. With rapid movements.
40. Food mixtures either arranged on a plate or tossed and served with a moist dressing.
41. A member of a rural Finnish people living in eastern Russia.
44. (British) An open river valley (in a hilly area).
47. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
49. The cry made by sheep.
52. Large lipoproteins rich in triglycerides.
55. A member of a North American Indian people living around the mouth of the Colorado river.
56. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
57. West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
58. Strike with disgust or revulsion.
59. A Muslim council of state.
61. The seventh month of the Hindu calendar.
62. A company emblem or device.
63. A small piece of anything (especially a piece that has been snipped off).
64. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
65. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
66. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
67. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
70. Serving as an essential component.
71. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You should be feeling quite healthy and natural today. Everything points to your taking the initiative in some group endeavor. You may have a job that is part-time, perhaps as a tour guide. You could be giving assistance to newcomers in a religious group. Whatever the case, you really are involved in conversations that involve memories of the past, as well as places of interest from your travels or from reading. The elderly love to talk about these things and there are much laughter and fun conversations in your part of the world today. Taking chances on the emotional level just seems somehow natural to you. Commonsense keeps you financially in check when it comes to a bit of shopping this afternoon. Do not loan or borrow money this month.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may be put in control of a few people today. Orientation, controlling a crowd and organizing people are just part of what you do well. You encourage others to ask questions and this eases any frustrations for them at a later time. You encourage and instruct and could be a good part of a team that enlists the public in education, the military or any new beginnings of a number of professions. This group you are leading will probably be full of young people. Listening to some of the young people in this country may be like listening to the sages of the ages. Anything is possible and ideas for investments in the future may be apparent. By the end of this day, you will find that you will be looking for more opportunities like this day offers.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You set life examples for your family and friends. Today, however, you will want to leave the door open to some beneficial changes. A family meeting is the perfect time for decisions regarding the way that money is spent or the introduction of entertaining requirements. You make group decisions about who is responsible for what decorations and respect thereof. You will be guiding or helping along the way but you will be pleased at the amount of cooperation and interest that you have ignited. You teach commonsense thinking when scheduling comes in to play. You may also discover it is a relief to be able to share the responsibility of decision-making. An open mind and a positive attitude equal success.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You could be looking to add a little color to your life, allowing your unique and unusual qualities to surface. It may surprise you to know that someone close to you understands you and is supportive of your eccentricities. You could establish some new solutions or stumble onto something very inventive. Allowing your creative and intuitive talent to evolve can bring you many nice surprises. You just somehow know that anything is possible if you will just set your sights high enough. You are not afraid to take risks at the deepest emotional level. Optimism and faith are the two guiding words and allowing yourself the luxury of exploring your feelings helps in understanding. Make an outline of the steps needed to get where you want to go.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your attitude seems at peace-others only hope to become as evolved as you appear to be. You take problems as valued lessons, rather than obstacles. You find a deep appreciation for responsibilities and duty. Nurturing is a larger-than-usual component in your life. Caring for others or having them return the favor is essential to your well-being. Although you very seldom ask for affection, you can successfully fit the two together well. Managing and directing others wherever you find yourself seems to be your specialty. Someone in authority recognizes your talent in these areas and may decide to put in a request for your time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are able to captivate and spellbind the audience today. A birthday party, a teaching lesson, a story-reading class or whatever you have gotten yourself into will certainly have positive returns for your effort. The audience is appreciative and you may decide this activity is something you would like to add to your life experiences. Note that this activity was a voluntary activity and there was no paycheck. Being optimistic and having faith in yourself will assure your success in other areas of your life. The experience today is a good practice, albeit a worthy one! You are ready, willing and able to accept new emotional experiences. This could mark a time when your life path changes. You and a mate open up to better communication at this time.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your close friend has a business dinner to go to next week and wants to ask your loved one to go with your friend. You might smile and then offer to help this person with a little money for an escort service. This is the most appropriate route to take. It will soon be time to take the next step in updating the place where you live. Take the opportunity this evening to get ideas from the rest of the family or others that live with you. Set a timetable and stick to it. This will help you to see progress all around you at all the right times. You could be feeling very optimistic this whole day. You have a great deal of faith and you enjoy living and experiencing life each day. This afternoon you make it a point to spend time with loved ones. Paint or photograph the sunset.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It should be a breeze for you to do any work requiring discipline or organization. There may be some very serious or meditative moments and you may find yourself in a very businesslike mood, although you will not be working in an office. This could mean you are at a bazaar and will be helping to sell some fun items. Some of the items people buy are to encourage and lift the spirit with a more positive mood. Someone could be seeking you out for your sidewalk psychology. Procuring and sharing information is emotionally significant to you at this time. Communicating your feelings becomes quite essential. Take turns enjoying a massage therapy session with your lover later today. Enjoy feeling luxuriously lazy this evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

One way to measure your life-progress is whether you have the same problems now as you did the year before. Although you may still have some of the habits that get you into some of the situations that cause you problems, you have learned how to detect and shrink the onset and length of the difficulties. Your progress toward your personal goals is admirable. You have, however, been neglecting your creative talents lately. It is time to open up a forgotten project and see it through to completion; you will be pleased with the results. You may also find that this creative project would make a thoughtful gift to someone special. You appreciate your life, your talents, your opportunities and your friends-including loved ones.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

A powerful need to nurture is becoming a bigger-than-usual component in your life. You could be feeling the need to care for others or to have them care for you, possibly on a public as opposed to a private level. You have needs and you sense the needs of others. Your understanding is helpful when patience is needed. Accepting praise for your tastes or belongings helps to make your day even a bit more pleasant. You may not have any problem in valuing your own life situation at this time. Study-time is productive and important. Later, you could find yourself enjoying a long conversation, writing a letter or making a special phone call. Long-distance conversations can be useful. You could be thinking of joining a study group.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You could find yourself in or around the activities that come with a parade or some other similar high-energy activity. The positive and magical looks on the faces of children delight everyone present for the experience. The air is crisp and people are talking, laughing and pointing to all sorts of eye-catching fantasies. You help to teach others through your actions and today you might have volunteered to help a wheelchair rider or handicapped person see this event. Your friends or family members may have decided they liked your idea and joined to help you share the day with others. There is much to learn from those less fortunate. Creative energy this evening may open a door to poetry, musical lyrics, advertisement jingle, etc., etc.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Those around you are going to find it very easy to understand exactly what you mean when you speak. You should find it a good time to read a romantic novel or to take in a movie. You may decide to read a book to a young person, even though the young person is not present. A tape recorder can come handy for playing another day. This method would also be fun when creating a story of your own. A typist could listen to your recording and type the story into a manuscript to submit to a publisher. You may be quite eloquent in speaking or communicating. Knowing how you feel about life should make the telling of some true story fun and captivating. Picture albums, hot tea and a bicycle ride for two ends this weekend with a smile.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Christmas

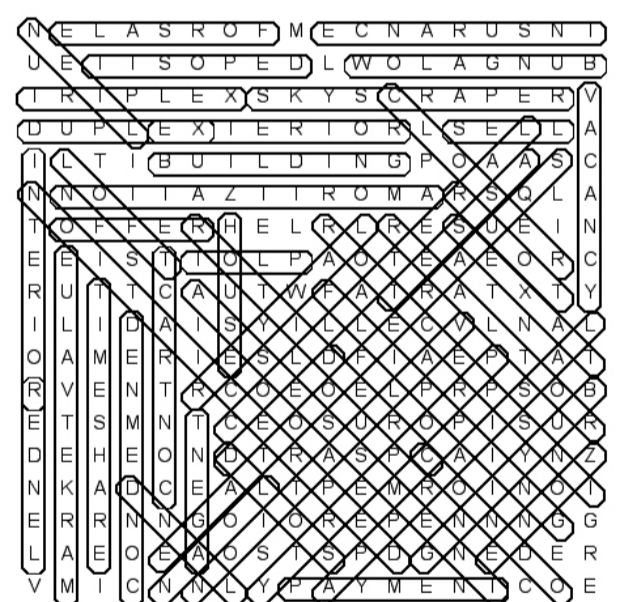
Find and circle all of the Christmas words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- |              |                |            |                |
|--------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| ANGEL        | FRUITCAKE      | MANGER     | SNOWFLAKES     |
| BELLS        | GABRIEL        | MARY       | SNOWMAN        |
| BETHLEHEM    | GIFTS          | MISTLETOE  | STABLE         |
| CANDLES      | GOLD           | MYRRH      | STAR           |
| CANDY CANE   | GREETING CARDS | ORNAMENTS  | STOCKING       |
| CAROLS       | HOLLY          | POINSETTIA | THREE WISE MEN |
| DECORATIONS  | ICICLES        | SANTA      | TOBOGGAN       |
| EGGNOG       | JESUS          | SHEPHERDS  | TOYS           |
| FAMILY       | JOSEPH         | SKATES     | TREE           |
| FRANKINCENSE | LIGHTS         | SLEIGH     | WREATH         |
| FRIENDS      |                |            |                |

Yesterday's Solution

Real Estate 1



- |              |              |              |                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| AGENT        | CONTRACT     | INTERIOR     | REALTOR        |
| AMORTIZATION | CREDITOR     | LAND         | SELL           |
| APPRAISAL    | DEED         | LAWYER       | SKYSCRAPER     |
| ASSESSMENT   | DEPOSIT      | LENDER       | SOLD           |
| ASSET        | DEPRECIATION | LIEN         | SQUARE FOOTAGE |
| BUILDING     | DUPLEX       | LOAN         | TAXES          |
| BUNGALOW     | EXTERIOR     | LOFT         | TIMESHARE      |
| BUYING       | FLIPPING     | MARKET VALUE | TOUR           |
| CLOSER       | FOR SALE     | OFFER        | TRIPLEX        |
| COLLATERAL   | HOUSE        | PAYMENT      | VACANCY        |
| CONDEMNED    | INSPECTOR    | PLOT         | VALUATION      |
| CONDO        | INSURANCE    | PROPERTY     | ZONE           |

The hidden message is: MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:  
Call MSAL hotline 128



**PHARMACIES**  
ON 24 HRS DUTY

**INTERNATIONAL CALLS**



**Hospitals**

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

**Clinics**

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
www.met.gov.kw



DAY: Sunday

06/12/2015

Issue Time 12:00

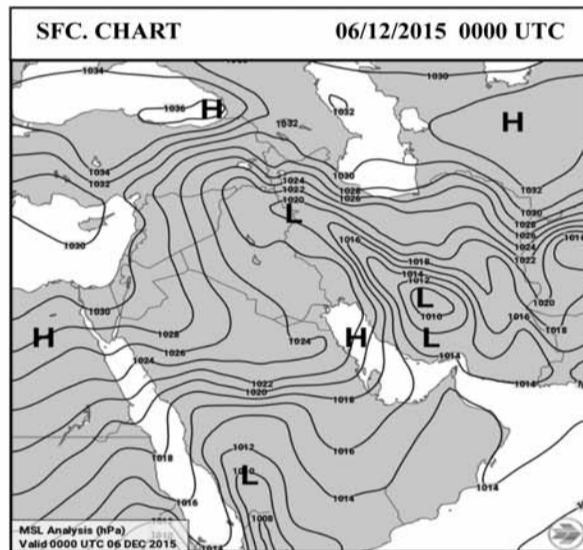
**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**

**BY DAY:** Cloudy to partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 40 km/h with a chance for light rain

**BY NIGHT:** Very cold with light to moderate freshening gradually at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h

<b>WARNING</b>	No Current Warnings
----------------	---------------------

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	14 °C	07 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	13 °C	07 °C
ABDALY	12 °C	07 °C
BUBYAN	13 °C	07 °C
JAHRA	13 °C	06 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	14 °C	07 °C
SALMIYAH	14 °C	08 °C
AHMADI	14 °C	08 °C
JAL ALIYAH	12 °C	06 °C
QAROH ISLAND	15 °C	13 °C
UMM AL-MARADEM	15 °C	13 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	12/07	Cold	14 °C	06 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Tuesday	12/08	Cool	16 °C	07 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	12/09	Fair	18 °C	09 °C	NW	10 - 30 km/h
Thursday	12/10	Fair	19 °C	10 °C	NW-VRB	08 - 26 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:05
Sunrise	06:29
Zuhr	11:39
Asr	14:31
Sunset	16:49
Isha	18:11

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	16 °C
MIN. Temp.	10 °C
MAX. RH	65 %
MIN. RH	17 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	.03 mm

**PRIVATE CLINICS**

<b>Ophthalmologists</b>	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
<b>Ear, Nose &amp; Throat (ENT)</b>	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daary	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
<b>General Practitioners</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rfae	25333501
<b>Urologists</b>	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

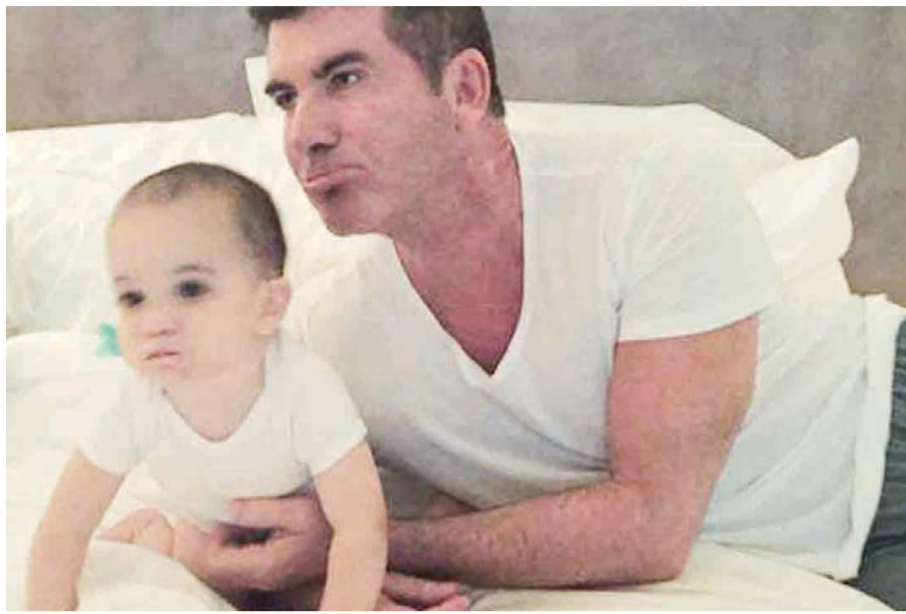
<b>Plastic Surgeons</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
<b>Family Doctor</b>	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
<b>Psychiatrists</b>	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
<b>Gynaecologists &amp; Obstetricians</b>	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s. Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
<b>General Surgeons</b>	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
<b>Internists, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

<b>Paediatricians</b>	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
<b>Dermatology</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Salam	23845955
<b>Dentists</b>	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdalateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
<b>Neurologists</b>	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
<b>Gastrologists</b>	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

<b>Endocrinologist</b>	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
<b>Physiotherapists &amp; VD</b>	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
<b>Rheumatologists:</b>	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
<b>Internist, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
<b>Consultant Cardiologist</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid	MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC
Assistant Professor Of Medicine	Head, Division of Cardiology
Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib	MD, PH.D, FACC
2611555-2622555	
Inaya German Medical Center	
Te: 2575077	
Fax: 25723123	

Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Lesotho	00266
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antigua	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Bahamas	001242	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahrain	00973	Martinique	00596
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritania	00222
Barbados	001246	Mauritius	00230
Belarus	00375	Mayotte	00269
Belgium	0032	Mexico	0052
Belize	00501	Micronesia	00691
Benin	00229	Moldova	00373
Bermuda	001441	Monaco	00377
Bhutan	00975	Mongolia	00976
Bolivia	00591	Montserrat	001664
Bosnia	00387	Morocco	00212
Botswana	00267	Mozambique	00258
Brazil	0055	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brunei	00673	Namibia	00264
Bulgaria	00359	Nepal	00977
Burkina	00226	Netherlands	0031
Burundi	00257	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Cambodia	00855	New Caledonia	00687
Cameroon	00237	New Zealand	0064
Canada	001	Nicaragua	00505
Cape Verde	00238	Niger	00227
Cayman Islands	001345	Nigeria	00234
Central African	00236	Niue	00683
Chad	00235	Norfolk Island	00672
Chile	0056	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
China	0086	North Korea	00850
Colombia	0057	Norway	0047
Comoros	00269	Oman	00968
Congo	00242	Pakistan	0092
Cook Islands	00682	Palau	00680
Costa Rica	00506	Panama	00507
Croatia	00385	Papua New Guinea	00675
Cuba	0053	Paraguay	00595
Cyprus	00357	Peru	0051
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Philippines	0063
Czech Republic	00420	Poland	0048
Denmark	0045	Portugal	00351
Diego Garcia	00246	Puerto Rico	001787
Djibouti	00253	Qatar	00974
Dominica	001767	Romania	0040
Dominican Republic	001809	Russian Federation	007
Ecuador	00593	Rwanda	00250
Egypt	0020	Saint Helena	00290
El Salvador	00503	Saint Kitts	001869
England (UK)	0044	Saint Lucia	001758
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Pierre	00508
Eritrea	00291	Saint Vincent	001784
Estonia	00372	Samoa US	00684
Ethiopia	00251	Samoa West	00685
Falkland Islands	00500	San Marino	00378
Faroe Islands	00298	Sao Tone	00239
Fiji	00679	Saudi Arabia	00966
Finland	00358	Scotland (UK)	0044
France	0033	Senegal	00221
French Guiana	00594	Seychelles	00284
French Polynesia	00689	Sierra Leone	00232
Gabon	00241	Singapore	0065
Gambia	00220	Slovakia	00421
Georgia	00995	Slovenia	00386
Germany	0049	Solomon Islands	00677
Ghana	00233	Somalia	00252
Gibraltar	00350	South Africa	0027
Greece	0030	South Korea	0082
Greenland	00299	Spain	0034
Grenada	001473	Sri Lanka	0094
Guadeloupe	00590	Sudan	00249
Guam	001671	Suriname	00597
Guatemala	00502	Swaziland	00268
Guinea	00224	Sweden	0046
Guyana	00592	Switzerland	0041
Haiti	00509	Syria	00963
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Serbia	00381
Honduras	00504	Taiwan	00886
Hong Kong	00852	Tanzania	00255
Hungary	0036	Thailand	0066
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Toga	00228
Iceland	00354	Tonga	00676
India	0091	Tokelau	00690
Indian Ocean	00873	Trinidad	001868
Indonesia	0062	Tunisia	00216
Iran	0098	Turkey	0090
Iraq	00964	Tuvalu	00688
Ireland	00353	Uganda	00256
Italy	0039	Ukraine	00380
Ivory Coast	00225	United Arab Emirates	00976
Jamaica	001876	United Kingdom	0044
Japan	0081	Uruguay	00598
Jordan	00962	USA	001
Kazakhstan	007	Uzbekistan	00998
Kenya	00254	Vanuatu	00678
Kiribati	00686	Venezuela	00582
Kuwait	00965	Vietnam	0084
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Laos	00856	Virgin Islands US	001340
Latvia	00371	Wales (UK)	0044
Lebanon	00961	Yemen	00967
Liberia	00231	Yugoslavia	00381
Libya	00218	Zambia	00260
Lithuania	00370	Zimbabwe	00263

Gossip



## Cowell feared for son's safety after burglary

Simon Cowell feared for his son's safety after being told his house had been burgled. The 56-year-old music mogul was awoken in the early hours of Friday morning by his bodyguard, who explained there had been a break in, and Simon's first thought was to check on the safety of his 21-month-old son Eric. Simon - who also lives with his girlfriend Lauren Silverman at their home in Holland Park, West London - shared: "It was nerve-racking. Lauren was woken up with me and we checked on Eric. That was the first thing we did, to make sure he was OK. Apart from the fact someone broke into my house and stole my stuff, which is scary, it could have been worse. Thankfully no one was hurt. But we have the worst guard dogs in the world." The thief

stole cash and jewelry thought to be worth hundreds of thousands of pounds, but Simon insisted that his first priority was the safety of his family. He told The Sun on Sunday newspaper: "It's not what they stole, it's the fact they got into the house. That was the frightening thing, the idea someone was in my house." Simon also revealed he plans to boost his security in light of the incident. Asked to put a price on the stolen items, he said: "I don't want to talk about that. The insurance company will cover that. It was some jewelry. The most important thing is to make sure everyone is OK. What's more concerning is how we stop people getting into this house. Wherever you live someone can get in. Maybe I have to get bigger guard dogs."

## Liam Payne wants to give up smoking



The One Direction singer has set his New Year's resolution to "grow up" and stop the bad habit but admits it will be tough. He said: "I'm going to try and give up smoking, which is hard, but I do want to. I want to. It's about time. Need to grow up now." Band mate Niall Horan has an equally health-driven goal for 2016 - to spend more time training in the gym. He added to PEOPLE magazine: "I'm going to train, succeed in the gym this year. I always do it when I'm on tour and then when I get home, I'm c\*\*p." Yeah, I would like to succeed properly and get the job done." Meanwhile, the band are set to go on a hiatus next year and the 22-year-old singer previously revealed their break would be for at least two years. He shared: "Obviously we're all going to take a break for a bit first and then consider where we are in the world. Then I just want to write songs. That's been the most fun process out of this, except for touring, the writing of the songs. We're going to come back, so there's something to write for as well, for us and for other people. We haven't really had time to write an album. Writing's not really a job, it's so much fun. We've always had to rush it, so it's going to be nice for the next two years - I'm going to write a few songs and see what happens."

## JOE JONAS IS 'UPSET' WITH GIGI HADID

The 'Just In Love' hitmaker is reportedly gutted his ex-girlfriend has moved one with the former One Direction star so quickly. A source said: "He was a bit upset how fast Gigi went out in public with Zayn, but it is what it is at this point. He still has feelings for Gigi that won't just disappear overnight. They did love each other and he still has a love for Gigi." Since his split from the 20-year-old model, the 26-year-old singer doesn't want to rush into a new relationship and is planning on focusing on his work, family and friends. An insider added to E! News: "He is not looking to rush into another relationship though just yet. He is focusing on his music and new projects that are in the works. He has some great friends and family around so, like anything, he knows his feelings for Gigi will pass with time." Meanwhile, Gigi's mother Yolanda Foster recently revealed her daughter is "loving life" following her split from Joe. Of Zayn, she said: "I haven't met him yet. Gigi's 20 years old, loving life, shopping like she should. I haven't met him yet, so I can't say anything about him."



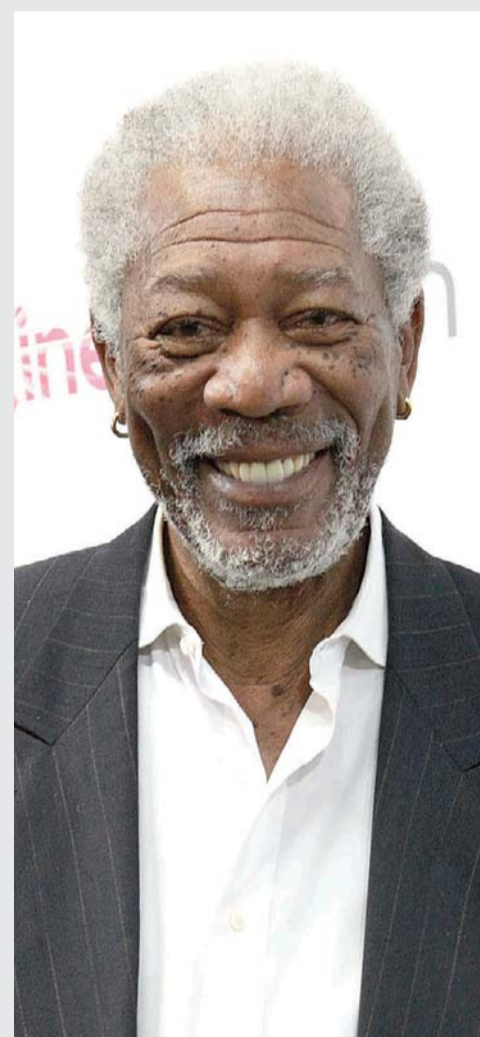
## Chris Brown: My daughter made me 'mellow'

Chris Brown feels very "humbled" to have a daughter. The 'Loyal' hitmaker is co-parenting his little girl, Royalty, with ex-lover Nia Guzman and insists he has become more "mellow" since becoming a father. He said: "I have a co-parenting job that's pretty amazing but, you know, learning how to be a dad, especially learning how to take care of somebody else. I barely know how to brush my teeth in the morning! It's actually great. It's very humbling ... It's very calming. I think I was a lot (more) ... rambunctious, very hyper as a kid but, now seeing that 10 times over, my daughter's kinda, like, mellowing me out." The 26-year-old singer also revealed his favorite time to spend with Royalty is around bedtime because it can be so "crazy". He added to Ryan Seacrest: "That's the best part of being a dad, doing those little things. Bedtime is crazy for me 'cause I always was like... trying to avoid bedtime when I was a kid, like, 'No, mum, just 15 more minutes, please!' So I'll keep like the kids' channel on and turn it all the way low and turn all the lights out, and, you know, I'll lay in the bed with her and, like, rub her back until she actually falls asleep. But some nights, she's not having it. Like, she just is total-



## Freeman unhurt after plane's forced landing

A plane carrying Morgan Freeman was forced to do an emergency landing in Mississippi. The Oscar-winning actor was the only passenger on board the plane, which experienced serious technical failures shortly after taking off, leading the pilot to perform an emergency crash landing. The 'Shawshank Redemption' star said: "Sometimes things don't go as planned and a tire blew on take-off which caused other problems. But thanks to my excellent pilot Jimmy Hobson we landed safely without a scratch. I cannot say the same about my plane. I appreciate the concern and prayers for our safety." The 78-year-old Hollywood icon was on his way to shoot 'The Story of God', a National Geographic television series about religion, when the plane was forced to land 36 miles from where it had taken off, in Tunica, Mississippi. Last year, Morgan - who has had a pilot's license for 12 years - was forced to land a malfunctioning plane on his way to the Toronto Film Festival. He was flying from his home in Mississippi to attend the premiere of his film 'Ruth & Alex' at the festival, but was 90 minutes late because of the terrifying incident.



## Khloe Kardashian visits her sister Kim in hospital

Khloe Kardashian has visited her sister Kim in hospital following the birth of her baby boy. The 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star welcomed her second child, a son, today (05.12.15) and her younger sister was on hand to visit the newborn whilst also tending to estranged husband Lamar Odom. She wrote on Twitter: "I know these hospital halls way too well. Hopping from one room to another." Kourtney Kardashian also alluded to the birth on social media, tweeting, "Baby's breath," alongside emoticons of a blue heart and a pair of praying hands. The birth of Kim and Kanye West's son was announced on the 35-year-old television personality's website today. A statement published on the site read: "Kim Kardashian

West and her husband, Kanye West, welcomed the arrival of their son this morning. Mother and son are doing well." And Kim - who also has daughter North, two, with husband Kanye - previously admitted she is planning to take her time to get her post-baby body back following the arrival of her son. She wrote: "A few weeks to go and 60 pounds up! I look at other celebrities and Instagram girls who are literally so skinny right after giving birth. How is that possible?!? I mean, I'm focused and I love the challenge of getting my body back and feeling good again, BUT I am going to be a little bit more realistic. I'm not saying anyone is being unhealthy or not doing it the right way, but how do they lose weight and look so good so fast?! (sic)."

## Olly Alexander: Music relieved my anxiety

Olly Alexander feels music has helped him channel his anxiety. The Years & Years frontman admits he has struggled with anxiety and depression in the past but has found an outlet through music and songwriting. When asked if music is like therapy to him at Capital's Jingle Bell Ball with Coca-Cola, he told BANG Showbiz: "No. Therapy is much better. But music is definitely something I do that helps channel my anxiety in a positive way." Meanwhile, the 25-year-old singer previously revealed he suffered panic attacks before school that were so bad he refused to go to school. He explained: "I was quite troubled at school, I was bullied. For whatever reason, like family life and my parents divorcing around that time, I had a messy childhood. "Being a teenager is horrible for a lot of people, anyway ... depression and anxiety on top of that becomes a very layered, complicated thing. I got to a point where I wouldn't go to school, and wouldn't get out of bed. I would have panic attacks. I was really bad, shaking, crying and hyperventilating. I saw a doctor but he wasn't that helpful." The 'King' hitmakers took to the stage tonight at the Jingle Bell Ball, whilst the likes of Coldplay, Ariana Grande and Nathan Sykes also performed.



## Guetta wants slot on Rihanna's album

David Guetta is hoping to make an appearance on Rihanna's album. The 'Lovers On The Sun' hitmaker has revealed he put together a ballad for the 'Diamonds' hitmaker's highly-anticipated upcoming album 'ANTI' but admits he's not too sure if it will make the final cut just yet. Speaking to BANG Showbiz at Capital's Jingle Bell Ball with Coca-Cola, he said: "I made one ballad that I know she really liked but you never know until the last minute." The 48-year-old music producer also revealed he feels "honored" to have recorded a track for the UEFA EURO 2016. He added: "I have this record I did for the UEFA Football club. That is crazy; it is a big honor for me representing my country. I am always working on my music. I have my new song with Sia and Fetty Wap." And David previously admitted he is "incredibly excited" about the track. He said at the time: "It is incredibly exciting ... to be

part of this huge football tournament in my home country. Music and football go hand in hand when it comes to celebration and enjoyment and I want to help to make this EURO the biggest and most memorable yet." David took to the stage during tonight's Jingle Bell Ball alongside the likes of Coldplay, Ariana Grande and Jess Glynne. Jason Derulo, Nathan Sykes and Years & Years also per-





## Adele has bonded with Victoria Beckham

The 27-year-old singer - who has three-year-old son Angelo with partner Simon Konecki - is said to have grown close to the 41-year-old fashion designer and have swapped tips about being mothers in the spotlight. An insider said: "Victoria loves Adele and they've met up with their kids. Adele says Victoria is much funnier than people realise and she under-

stands the pressure of being a mum in the showbiz world." The 'Hello' hitmaker has reportedly also been growing close to Jennifer Lawrence and Emma Stone and enjoyed a night out on the town with the 'Hunger Games' star and the 'Birdman' actress last month. A source told Closer magazine: "Adele met Jennifer at a showbiz bash and the pair had been texting for ages

to get something in the diary. Emma is a friend of Jennifer's and a huge Adele fan so the trio planned a night out together when they were all in New York. "Adele loved having a proper girlie night out and they all enjoyed wine and had a giggle. They're all similar ages so it was nice for Adele to let her hair down and enjoy a rare night away from mummy duty."

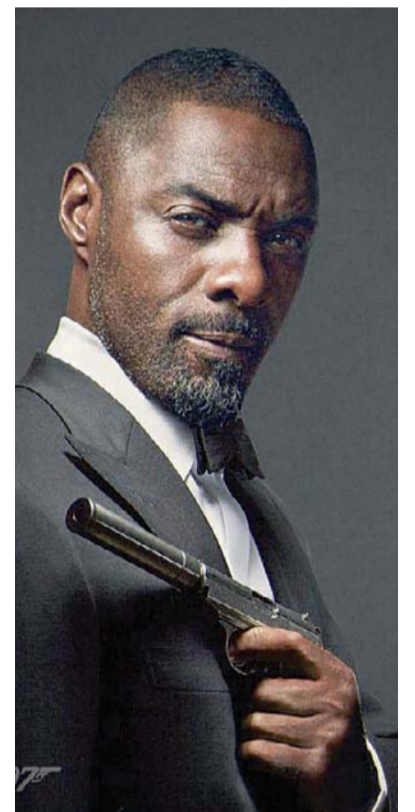
## Lance Bass 'different life'

Lance Bass thinks he would have had a "different life" if he came out when he was younger. The "NSYNC singer believes not revealing he was gay when he was a young boy had left him feeling "separated" from his friends and family. He shared: "I would have had a different life. I would have enjoyed myself more and I wouldn't have had to hide something major in my life from the whole world. "It separated me from my friends and family and so I would love to get those younger years back." And the 36-year-old singer found writing a memoir, which he titled 'Out of Sync', in 2007 was very "therapeutic". He added to BELLA New York magazine: "It's something I hid for so long. I kind of wanted to disappear for a little bit and let that digest because it was odd being that vulnerable to the world after being so hidden. "It was a little freaky, and I felt writing a memoir was very therapeutic. To be able to tell that coming out story and know that you are hopefully helping some other gay kid out there relate to your story is an honor to do that."



## Idris Elba 'battles' with fear

The 'Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom' star admits he struggles with the fear of failing but gets through it by learning not to "respect" those feelings. He said: "Fear is an interesting one for me. I think it's definitely part of what goes on inside my head. I battle it. "I don't respect fear. I don't mean that in an arrogant way, but I am self-aware, and that's how I deal with it." The 43-year-old actor also revealed he has felt more "responsible" since being given more leading roles in films but admits he misses being a part of an ensemble. He added to hungertv.com: "With growth comes a lot of responsibility. I think one of the tougher things when you go from being a supporting actor to a leading actor is that your process is slightly different. "You find yourself on your own quite a bit, and when you're used to an ensemble, that can be a little unsettling. But you're given a lot more freedom to create in that space, and that's a gift for any actor. That freedom is why I love what I do."



## Brett Rossi wants 'justice'

The former fiancée of Charlie Sheen has filed a lawsuit against the 'Anger Management' star where she claims he was "negligent" and has left her "emotionally distressed" in not revealing to her he was HIV positive but she has insisted she's not in it for the money. She told FOX411: "I want justice. If I wanted money, I would have kept our child. If I wanted money, I would have kept quiet. I want justice. "If he would have told me from day one, from the first time that we met, there would have never been a relationship. I never would have been sexually active with him, "I stayed because when we had a heart to heart. I asked him, is this for real, is this what you want, is this forever, now and forever? He said yes, I want to marry you, I want to have a family with you, I want to have normal life." However, the star refutes the allegations, which also includes assault. His lawyer Martin D. Singer said: "Charlie Sheen intends to vigorously defend the lawsuit filed by Scottine Ross. "We are confident that Mr. Sheen will prevail in this action and will prevail on his claims for affirmative relief against her."



## Kim's post-baby body plans

Kim Kardashian West wants to lose her baby weight slowly. The 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star has just given birth to her second child, a baby boy, but has insisted she is in no rush to ditch the baby weight and would rather be a "little bit more realistic" and take her time. She wrote on her official website: "A few weeks to go and 60 pounds up! I look at other celebrities and Instagram girls who are literally so skinny right after giving birth. How is that possible?!?!" I mean, I'm focused and I love the challenge of getting my body back and feeling good again, BUT I am going to be a little bit more realistic. I'm not saying anyone is being unhealthy or not doing it the right way, but how do they lose weight and look so good so fast?! (sic)" Meanwhile, the 35-year-old television personality - who also has two-year-old North - recently admitted she would love to have a third child and isn't worried about her weight "slipping" until then. She explained: "I'm not worried about after [giving birth to my second child] ... I'm just worried about number three, that's when your body really starts to slip."

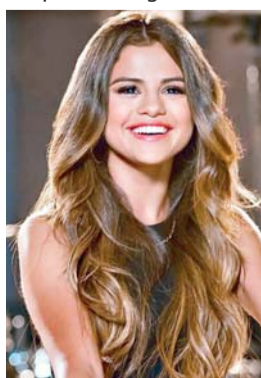
## Kim Wilde: My looks helped my career

Kim Wilde thinks her looks were a "big part" of her career success. The 55-year-old singer burst onto the music scene in 1981 with her debut single 'Kids in America' and has admitted her aesthetic appeal played a big part in her rise to the top of the industry. The blonde star said: "Looks were a big part of my success, and I always understood that. "I grew up in the 70s when there were a lot of beautiful people around, not least David Bowie. I embraced it, but I never took myself that seriously." Although Kim felt objectified during her meteoric rise, she also admitted she was happy to indulge those attitudes for the sake of her career. She confessed: "I felt a bit objectified as a pop star in the 80s, but I went along with it quite willingly. "Although you'll never find pictures of me displaying half as much as what the girls are showing these days. Maybe they've got better bodies!" However, Kim conceded she suffered a slump in her 30s, when she started feeling fretful about the world. She told the Guardian newspaper: "I had a bit of a bad time in my early 30s. I was really lost and anxious. My dad said to me: 'You've got to push out on the world! I did and I recovered.'"



## Gomez feeling 'very healthy'

Selena Gomez feels "very healthy" following her chemotherapy. The 'Same Old Love' hitmaker was struck down with lupus, an autoimmune disease, three years ago and revealed she had to undergo the treatment but insists she is back to full health now despite having the chronic condition for life. She told Billboard magazine: "It has been overwhelming and the response has been very supportive, which is nice - but it still makes me a little uncomfortable. "I waited for the right time to talk about it because I am in a great place and I'm very healthy. I'm not trying to be loud about it: It was time to use my platform to help." Meanwhile, the 23-year-old beauty previously admitted she didn't really "understand" the diagnosis and tried to keep it as private as possible whilst she underwent treatment. She shared: "[It happened] three years ago... That's when I found it and I think it was just very complicated because I didn't understand and then it was something that I did want to keep private until my whole life suddenly wasn't private. "You'll have it forever. It's kind of one of those situations. You just have to take care of yourself." —Bang Showbiz



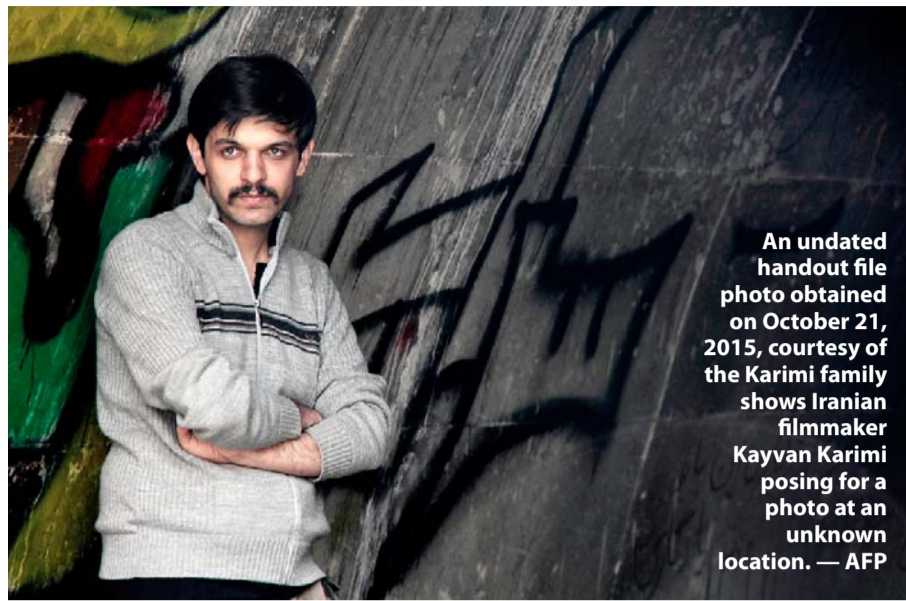
## Courteney Cox is 'desperate' to try counseling

The 'Friends' actress and Snow Patrol singer Johnny McDaid are said to have called off their engagement earlier this month but it has been claimed that things had been "rocky for a while" between the pair. A source said: "Things have been rocky for a while. They were arguing over wedding plans, had one almighty row and she asked him to leave. "They are both devastated that it has come to this. Courteney has been especially upset and is telling friends it's a trial separation while they figure out how to move forward. She's desperate to have relationship counseling." The 51-year-old actress - who met the 'Run' hitmaker through mutual pal Ed Sheeran - still loves Johnny and wants to marry him one day but feels they must "address their problems" first. The insider added to Grazia magazine: "They fell in love extremely quickly. And now it seems that they've reached a stumbling block. "Courteney says she loves Johnny and wants to marry him, but she knows deep down they can't plaster over cracks and get hitched without addressing their problems. But she is still hopeful they will get through this, as we all are."

## Jolie 'better understands' Pitt

Angelina Jolie feels she has a "better understanding" of Brad Pitt since they starred opposite each other in 'By The Sea'. The 40-year-old beauty worked alongside her husband on the romantic drama film and admits portraying a couple on screen helped their real life relationship. She said: "Brad has never seen what I'm like when he's left me after one of our fights. Sometimes I'm strong. But as soon as he leaves the room, I melt into tears. With this film, he sees it. And I see into his private moments. "I filmed it and I discovered his expressions. So I better understand his frustrations over certain aspects in me." However, the 'Maleficent' star admits the couple sometimes found it hard to hide their love for each other when their characters were supposed to be angry at each other. She added to the French edition of ELLE magazine: "The most difficult scenes were the most drawn-out fights; normally if Brad sees me cry, it ends by his taking care of me. "But here, in the film he had to stay angry, and I couldn't take it personally. It was so strange and interesting."





An undated handout file photo obtained on October 21, 2015, courtesy of the Karimi family shows Iranian filmmaker Kayvan Karimi posing for a photo at an unknown location. — AFP

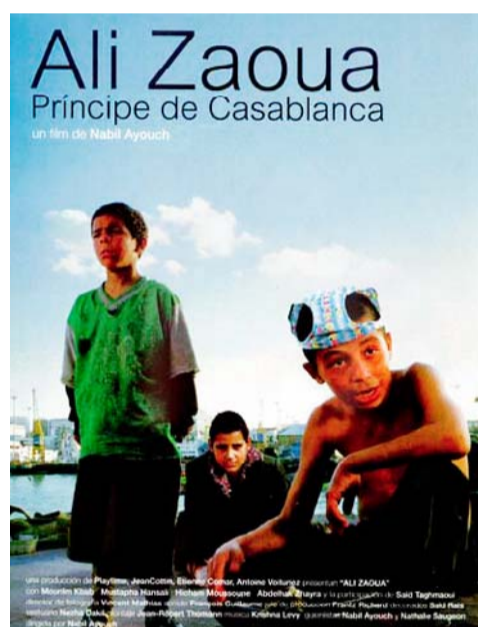
## Iran film directors protest colleague's jail term

A group of 137 Iranian film directors have written a letter urging the country's judiciary to acquit a colleague recently sentenced to six years in jail and 223 lashes. Kayvan Karimi, 30, was convicted by a revolutionary court of "insulting the sacred" for his film "Writing on the City", about political slogans daubed on the walls of Tehran's streets. He remains free as the case is under appeal but if the next hearing on December 23 goes against him the sentence could be carried out.

Speaking of their "shock and disbelief" the filmmakers urged the sentence to be rescinded by "applying justice in the appeals court where misunderstandings can be settled." "We Iranian documentary makers, like other artistic and cultural guilds of this land, know their right is to

create work in a safe and stress-free environment far from accusations," they wrote. Karimi, an Iranian Kurd, earlier received support from French, Italian and Spanish filmmakers. "This film has nothing to do with sacred issues" and the prosecution did not say "what scenes were an insult" to Islam, his lawyer, Amir Raeesian, has said.

Artists and several reformist journalists were recently arrested in Iran and accused of being part of a network financed by US intelligence, aided by European countries including Britain, the Netherlands and Sweden. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has warned against economic and cultural infiltration from the West since a nuclear deal with six leading states, including the US, was struck with Tehran in July. — AFP



Given the rising tide of terrorist attacks throughout the world, attributed in part to under-privileged environments, Ayouch's "Horses," is increasingly cited as a poignant insight into the underlying causes of terrorism. "Horses" was a premonition of what happened in Paris, not just the situation in Morocco," said Ayouch. For his most recent film, "Much Loved," Ayouch decided to switch his gaze to a more subtle form of violence provoked by poverty - in a tale about four prostitutes working in Marrakech, based on 18 months of research that originally began as documentary project but evolved into what he calls a "fiction du reel".

### Tight budget

"I saw that I had a perspective on the women," Ayouch commented. "It made me feel something and it made me want to write something - about the beauty I see inside them and how it's hard to see this beauty. And how they're invisible." Ayouch was aware that the subject matter was particularly problematic. After the project was twice rejected for subsidy funding by the Moroccan Cinema Center (CCM), he decided to co-produce the production, on a tight budget. As with Ayouch's previous films, "Loved" circulated in A-list festivals, including a world premiere in Cannes Directors' Fortnight at Cannes from which it segued to Toronto's Contemporary World Cinema section.



"Much Loved" also played at the Festival d'Angouleme in France in August, where Ayouch won best director and Loubna Abidar took best actress. Abidar also won best actress at the Festival du Film Francophone in Namur in September, and at Spain's Gijon Festival in November. In mid-November, the pic had its first screening in the Arab world, at the Carthage Int'l Film Fest, where it won jury prize. Ayouch reveals that the pic will also be competing for a Golden Globe, proposed by the publicist. However at home "Loved" was banned in May by Morocco's Ministry of Communication for "serious outrage to the moral values of Moroccan women"; private court proceedings were also filed against Ayouch on these grounds. Bowed but not broken by this experience, Ayouch is planning his forthcoming projects, starting with social drama "Razzia," while exploring alternative distribution possibilities for "Loved," including a VOD release. The revelation of certain red lines of censorship in Morocco has been a formative experience for

## 'Star Wars' director faces hype, history in 'Force Awakens'

The new installment in the "Star Wars" movie saga opens in theaters this month against a formidable force: the galactic hopes of devoted fans who have waited a decade to revisit their beloved universe of Jedi, droids and lightsabers. Can "The Force Awakens," the seventh episode in the celebrated sci-fi series, meet those expectations when it debuts on December 18? "No," said director J.J. Abrams. "How can anything live up to any expectation like that?" What the movie will offer, Abrams told Reuters, is great performances and visual effects, music "that breaks your heart and soars," plus a story, characters and creatures that are new, but feel like they fit in the universe created by George Lucas in the original 1977 film.

"George was creating a world that we wanted to go back to in order to tell a story we'd never seen yet," Abrams said. "In a way, we were going backward to go forward." For example, he said, the filmmakers created droids "to feel completely new and different and at the same time something that was so of Star Wars. That was always the challenge."

Lucas bowed out of "Star Wars" after he sold his film studio to Walt Disney Co in 2012 for \$4 billion. "Force Awakens" is the first in a new film trilogy. "There's no way that I can imagine anything touching the magic of what he did," Abrams said, "and yet we all did the best we could to make that happen." Set 30 years after "Return of the Jedi," the new movie brings characters Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill), Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) and Han Solo (Harrison Ford) back to their galaxy

far, far away. Newcomers Rey (Daisy Ridley) and Finn (John Boyega) lead a younger generation that grapples with the conflicts that haunted the past.

Disney is guarding details about the plot of "Force Awakens." The secrecy has stirred rampant online speculation, particularly about the fate of Skywalker, who is absent from trailers and posters promoting the new film. Abrams said the character was purposely left off to keep key parts of the story under wraps. "It's just what our narrative is," Abrams said, "so if it's driving anyone crazy, apologies. But it's mostly about wanting to protect the experience for the people who might go see the movie."

Ridley, who plays a scavenger, said the film captures the "delightful" tone of the earlier movies. "Star Wars" never had like insane violence or anything," she said. "It's always joyful and always uplifting even though bad things happen." "Force Awakens" also features "classic Star Wars humor, choppy dialogue," said Boyega, who described his role as a conflicted Stormtrooper. Adam Driver plays Kylo Ren, a character dressed similar to Darth Vader who is presumed to play the main villain, though that depends on the perspective. "I don't think he's evil at all," Driver said. "I think he's right." Aside from fan anticipation, the movie faces lofty box office projections for the opening weekend, from \$170 million to \$220 million in just the United States and Canada, a level never achieved in December. "Jurassic World" holds the record with \$208.8 million in June. — Reuters



This file photo taken on November 14, 2015 shows Irish band U2 (from left) lead singer Bono, guitarist The Edge, drummer Larry Mullen Jr and bass player Adam Clayton paying homage to attacks victims near the Bataclan concert hall on November 14, 2015 in Paris, a day after a series of coordinated attacks in and around Paris. — AP

## U2's Bono writes Paris attacks song ahead of French gigs

U2 frontman Bono has written a song about the Paris attacks ahead of a defiant return to the French capital yesterday that may also feature the Eagles of Death Metal whose show was targeted by the jihadists. The Irish rock band cancelled their shows in Paris earlier this month in the wake of the attacks on November 13 that left 130 dead. But they quickly rescheduled them and are due to appear at the 16,000-capacity AccorHotels Arena today and tomorrow.

"We think of music as the sound of freedom," said guitarist The Edge, in an interview with CNN. "We think rock and roll has a part to play, so going back to Paris to us is not just symbolic. I think we're actually starting the process of resistance, of defiance against this movement," he said, referring to the Islamic State group that carried out the attacks. In the same interview for CNN, Bono recited lyrics from a new song called "Streets of Surrender" that touched on the violence. He said he had started writing the song for Italian singer and long-time friend, Zucchero.

The lyrics include the lines: "Every man's got one city of liberty, for me it's Paris, I love it. "Every time I get lost down these ancient streets, I find myself again. I didn't come here to fight you. I

came down these streets of love and pride to surrender." The song also touches on the refugee crisis, with a lyric mentioning the young Syrian boy photographed dead on a beach earlier this year: "Everybody's crying about some kid that they found lying on a beach, born in a manger." The worst of the violence took place at the Bataclan music venue, where 90 people were killed during a gig by the Eagles of Death Metal.

Rumours have been circulating in the music press that the band will join U2 on stage in Paris for at least one of their shows, though neither camp has yet confirmed the appearance. Bono told CNN that the Islamic State's ban on music was perverse. "Think about the idea of outlawing music. A child sings before it can speak. It's the very essence of our humanity," he said. Bono and The Edge are both francophiles who share a house in the south of France, and there are rumors the singer also has a home in Paris. "It seemed like the target was culture and every kind of expression of the best of humanity: great music, restaurants, French food-everything that we hold dear," said The Edge of this month's attacks, which hit several restaurants and bars as well as the Bataclan venue. — AFP

# Morocco's Nabil Ayouch preps social drama 'Razzia'

A 46-year old Nabil Ayouch is Morocco's best-known helmer - due to his incisive social dramas that highlight the plight of characters from impoverished backgrounds who resort to desperate actions. His 2012 pic, "Horses of God," about the 2003 Casablanca suicide bombers, was sold to 40 countries and officially presented in the US by Jonathan Demme, where it was Morocco's candidate for the Foreign-Language Academy Award and the Golden Globes.



rorism in Arab societies, and that the problem arose because instead of showing the women as mere victims, it highlighted their inner strength.

### Banning films

"Instead of showing poor young women who are being beaten all the time. I portrayed my main characters as warriors. That's also why it was banned. But that's precisely what I wanted to show." Ayouch says that he was shocked by the testimonies provided by the women that he interviewed over the 18 month preparation period, which haunted him afterwards. Ironically, it was perhaps precisely the power of his visceral filmmaking - intensely conveying both the client's probing male gaze and the young women's defiant vitality - that led to the ban. Sex scenes have featured in previous Moroccan films, but never so intensely. Nonetheless Ayouch believes that it's important to capture the reality of the situation and that instead of banning films on the subject, action should be taken.

"This topic is hidden under a veil," he says. "The reality is much more disturbing." Ayouch believes that the attempts to ban films will ultimately prove ineffective because of the Internet, including the expansion of VOD platforms through the Arab world. He is currently exploring this avenue for distribution of his film. "It's time to look for new ways to show our movies," he says. The helmer believes that it's never been more important to have powerful voices coming from the Arab world, especially in the wake of terrible events such as the November Paris attacks.

"I was terribly affected by what happened in Paris," he says. "I never thought that the war would be so total. So blind." Ayouch believes that one of the answers to the phenomenon of terrorism, is the creation of cultural centers in deprived areas, partly inspired by the Maisons de Jeunesse which he himself frequented while growing up in the suburbs of Paris and where he says he learned how to tap dance, sing, act, saw his first concert and his first Eisenstein and Chaplin films.

In 2014, he helped set up a cultural center in Sidi Moumen, the district of the 2003 Casablanca bombers - and is involved in the opening of two new cultural centers in 2016 - one in Fez, the other in Essaouira. "We're facing an emergency," he says. "Creation of cultural centers, or making films, may be just a drop in the ocean. But we have to do something. Some people are completely desperate, locked in despair, without hope. Just look at the refugee crisis. People are looking for something that doesn't even exist. It's extremely sad and involves such profound human injustices." Ayouch's desire to focus on the plight of despairing minorities fuels his next project, "Razzia," which was initially conceived as a futuristic film but has changed considerably.

### 'Much Loved'

The underlying premise remains the same - of the division of society into two blocs, rich and poor - but he has now made it much more contemporary. Ayouch received a \$500,000 grant from the CCM for the original sci-fi version of the project, penned by "Horses" scribe Jamal Belmahi, but given that he has changed the project considerably he's decided to re-apply. He says that the experience generated by the controversy around "Much Loved" intensified his desire to make a contemporary tale. "It revealed a new way to tell the story," he says. He also thinks that this will be a vital testing ground: "With the new draft this will be a real test of whether there is still a place for me in Morocco to treat some subjects with some freedom of expression."

Ayouch still intends to use some special effects and envisages adopting a new visual approach, through heightened realism, rather than "fiction du reel". He cites inspirations such as the TV series " Fargo," and David Cronenberg's "A History of Violence," in terms of portraying hate and violence in society without being violent. "Exploring a new aesthetic doesn't mean that the film will be less realistic," he says. "In 'Razzia,' I want to be less visceral, more intellectual - exploring latent violence." Despite the difficult months experienced in 2015, Ayouch remains optimistic. "I'm still hopeful for this country and for the youth of this country and the changes that we can bring as artists, as film directors. We're on the front line." — Reuters





US actor Bill Murray, second left, holds his award for his contribution to acting, as US director and President of the Jury Francis Ford Coppola, right, and his daughter and director Sofia Coppola, second right, and Jury member Indian actress Richa Chadda pose during the opening night of the 15th Marrakech International Film Festival.



Jury members, from left to right, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Amal Ayouch, Anton Corbijn, Naomi Kawase, Francis Ford Coppola, Olga Kurylenko, Sami Bouajila, Richa Chadda and Sergio Castellitto attend the photocall during the 15th Marrakech International Film Festival in Marrakech. — AP photos



Indian actress Madhuri Dixit holds her award for her contribution to acting.

## Francis Ford Coppola leads talk at Marrakech Jury's Presser

Marrakech Festival kicked off on a political note as Francis Ford Coppola and fellow jury members addressed the recent Paris attacks, their presence in Morocco and the role of filmmakers in tumultuous times during the opening press conference. Coppola, who attended the press conference with Anton Corbijn ("Life"), Jean-Pierre Jeunet ("The Young and Prodigious T.S. Spivet"), Naomi Kawase ("Still the Water"), Sergio Castellitto ("You Can't Save Yourself Alone"), Olga Kurylenko ("A Perfect Day"), Richa Chadda ("Gangs of Wasseypur") and Amal Ayouch ("The Gospel of Mark"), talked about the obstacles that filmmakers must overcome to make personal movies that can change the world.

"Don't make the mistake of thinking that just because art has the power to change the world that the artists are in charge of their art because they're not.

Today, if you want to know who's running the world, look at who is the major employer of artists of the world—it's the various corporations who are employing them," said Coppola.



Canadian director Atom Egoyan, left, chats with US director Sofia Coppola next to her father US director Francis Ford Coppola during a royal dinner at the 15th Marrakech International Film Festival in Marrakech, Morocco, Saturday. The festival runs from Dec 4-12. — AP

"The language of cinema was invented at the turn of the last century by pioneers who were free to experiment but today you can't dare to experiment. People who control the motion

pictures want to make (profitable films). Now we're at a turning point: As artists we can change the world but to do that we need to be free to experiment," added Coppola.

Coppola also addressed the Arab world crisis. "What's happening right now to Islam is heartbreaking—if you know the Koran, you know that the very first words say 'God, the gracious and the merciful,' these words are the roots of that beautiful religion which is being misunderstood," said Coppola.

Castellitto admitted that he was initially hesitant to come to Marrakech in light of the Paris terror attacks but felt that coming to Morocco and be part of the jury was "an act of resistance, a political gesture."

"It's crucial that we continue doing our job and keep being optimistic about the future," pointed out Castellitto.

Jeunet, meanwhile, said that the terror attacks over the last year have made him fearful. "30 years ago I worked at Charlie Hebdo with Cabu and Wolinski (two of the cartoonists who were killed in the Jan 7 attack) but today if my co-screenwriter proposed me to make a film showing images of who you know (alluding to Mahomet) I wouldn't do it. Sadly, I think a Kalashnikov has more power than a camera today." — Reuters



Egyptian actress Youssra poses on the red carpet.

## Celebrate this festive season with Centrepunt

Centrepunt, the region's largest family fashion retailer welcomes you to shop its exclusive holiday collection this festive season. In a region where gifting is considered a sign of care, and giving to our loved ones is second nature, Centrepunt prides itself on being the one stop destination for the entire family's gifting needs.

Babyshop has a delightful collection of toys that will light up your little one's eyes. There's something for all children, from the much-loved Minion toy with an inflatable radio control to Disney's Frozen-themed Skate & Sing that fulfills every little girl's dream to sing along with Elsa and



Anna. The collection also includes cherished items like Sesame Street Big Hugs Elmo that is perfect for pre-schoolers and not only loves to cuddle, sing, move and explore but also teaches the ABCs, numbers, shapes, colors and more. No toy collection is complete without Barbie, making Rock 'N Royals Courtney the best gift for little girls to play with and dress up in different rock chic look. This festive season's toys

will bring excitement and joy to all. Splash stylish festive collection sees men treated to a unique urban contemporary outerwear collection. The trendy pieces will include classic men's fashion choices such as biker jackets, gilets and V-neck sweaters, ideal for the upcoming season. Ladies are treated to fun patterns and prints in the latest collection including tartan, animal prints and winter florals. The collection features fun and stylish pieces such as fur crop tops, suede joggers and leggings along with metallic accessories that provide just the right amount of shimmer.

The footwear fashion at Shoemart includes opulent heels and stylish flats, which offer equal levels of comfort and are perfect for the upcoming holiday season. The men's footwear selection has trendy moccasins, high top sneakers and sturdy boots, while children's shoes are given a modern makeover this season with classy boots and an array of multi-colored strappy sandals to complement their look.

You can party in style with Fiorelli's latest collection of designer handbags and clutches at Lifestyle. The collection is designed to hold your everyday essentials while also providing the necessary glitz and glamour to your evening outfits.

Sophisticated style is translated in every piece from a must-have saddle bag to a tri-compartment zip top tote. Lifestyle's festive collection will help you stay warm and cozy this winter, with its range of colorful and comfortable blankets.

The collection also includes great hostess gifts for upcoming festive parties, with candles and box sets with lotion and body wash making it to the top of the festive gifting list. The store is filled with festive spirit with Christmas candles and lights on offers across the store, adding sparkle to Centrepunt.

## Hublot launches its first Middle East and Africa campaign

Luxury Swiss watch brand Hublot unveiled its first ever Middle East and Africa advertising campaign, announcing Lebanese Australian celebrity Daniella Rahme as its new "egerie" for the region. Hublot has always prided itself in being "first, different and unique"; reinforcing these key values, the Swiss watchmaker is the first luxury brand to have developed and launched a Middle East and Africa campaign, fully produced and shot in the region.

Featuring the new face of Hublot's ladies campaign, TV presenter and host of famous international talent show "The X-Factor" on MBC Daniella Rahme, in a multifaceted production embodying the brand's Art of Fusion concept, the campaign celebrates the link between tradition—with the locations and backgrounds—and innovation—through the outfits and watches.

Hublot Middle East and Africa Regional Director Marco Tedeschi presented the campaign and announced the new face of the campaign during Bahrain's Jewellery Arabia 2015 at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre, in the presence of watch connoisseurs, collectors and media.

"Hublot started out as a brand offering men's watches; however, with our 'Art of Fusion' ideas, we succeeded in creating extremely feminine watches that bring together innovative techniques, fashion and glamour, whether with the Big Bang Broderie collection or with the Tutti Frutti and Jeans lines. We will increase the number of Ladies' collections in 2016; as such, our Middle East and Africa campaign featuring Daniella Rahme will bring our female customers closer to our luxurious and stylish timepieces," said Marco Tedeschi.

The campaign, in its three looks, is set in different backgrounds that depict some of the region's assets; a panoramic view from an ancient fort, an old house in a fishing village and a sea shore at sunset. The warm hues of the images do not break with the past; Hublot is actually paying homage to it by connecting it to the future.



## 'The Look of Silence' wins IDA Award for Best Documentary of 2015

"The Look of Silence," Joshua Oppenheimer's critically-acclaimed companion piece to "The Act of Killing," won top honors at the International Documentary Association's IDA Awards Saturday night. The film is one of 15 finalists squaring off for Oscar nominations this year. Winning in the short category was Dee Hibbert-Jones and Nomi Talisman's "Last Day of Freedom," an animated account of Bill Babbitt's decision to support and help his brother in the face of war, crime and capital execution, which is also on the shortlist of Academy contenders.

Robert Gordon and Morgan Neville's "Best of Enemies," about the 1968 televised debates between Gore Vidal and William F. Buckley Jr, won a pair of awards: best editing and the ABC News VideoSource Award. Actor and comedian Bob Odenkirk presented the org's Pioneer Award to Netflix Chief Content Officer Ted Sarandos, while Danny Glover presented Tony Tabatznik and the Bertha Foundation with the Amicus Award in recognition of their work supporting the essential needs of the non-fiction media landscape. Filmmaker Kathryn Bigelow was also

on hand to present "Cartel Land" director Matthew Heineman with the Courage Under Fire Award.

Full list of winners below.

### Best Feature Award

"The Look of Silence"  
Director: Joshua Oppenheimer  
Producer: Signe Byrge Sorensen  
Drafthouse Films and Participant Media  
**Best Cinematography**  
"The Russian Woodpecker"  
Cinematography by: Artem Ryzhikov

### Best Editing

"Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck"  
Edited by: Joe Beshenkovsky and Brett Morgan

### Best Writing

"Listen to Me Marlon"  
Written by: Stevan Riley  
Co-Writer: Peter Ettedgui

### Best Music

"Best of Enemies"  
Original Score by: Jonathan Kirkscey  
ABC News VideoSource Award  
"Best of Enemies"

Directors: Robert Gordon and Morgan Neville  
Magnolia Pictures  
**Best Curated Series Award**  
"Independent Lens"  
Executive Producers: Sally Jo Fifer and Lois Vossen  
ITVS, PBS  
"POV"  
Executive Producers: Simon Kilmurry and Chris White  
POV, PBS  
**Best Limited Series Award**  
"The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst"  
Executive Producer:  
Jason Blum  
Co-Executive Producer: Zac Stuart-Pontier  
Produced by: Andrew Jarecki and Marc Smerling  
HBO  
**Best Episodic Series Award**  
"Chef's Table"  
Executive Producers: David Gelb and Andrew Fried  
Netflix



Joshua Oppenheimer, left, director of the documentary film "The Look of Silence," and the film's producer Signe Byrge Sorensen pose together at the 2015 IDA Documentary Awards at Paramount Studios. —AP photos

### Best Short Form Series Award

"Do Not Track"  
Executive Producer: Hugues Sweeney  
National Film Board of Canada, Upian, Arte, and BR  
David L. Wolper Student Documentary Award  
"The Archipelago"  
Director: Benjamin Huguet  
The National Film and Television School  
**Best Short Award**  
"Last Day of Freedom"  
Directors: Dee Hibbert-Jones and Nomi Talisman  
Pare Lorentz Award  
"How to Change the World"  
Director: Jerry Rothwell  
Career Achievement Award  
Gordon Quinn  
Pioneer Award  
Ted Sarandos  
Amicus Award  
Tony Tabatznik and the Bertha Foundation  
Emerging Documentary Filmmaker Award  
Lyric R Cabral and David Felix Sutcliffe  
Courage Under Fire Award  
Matthew Heineman — Reuters

# Lifestyle

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015

Iran film directors protest colleague's jail term

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Indian brides sit for a group photo before a mass wedding hosted by a diamond trader in Surat, India, yesterday. 151 young couples tied the knot at the mass wedding hosted by Indian diamond trader Mahesh Savani, who has been funding the weddings of fatherless women in the city of Surat for several years. Weddings in India are expensive affairs with the bride's family traditionally expected to pay the groom a large dowry of cash and gifts. Hundreds of people, mostly family members and neighbors of the couple, are hosted at lavish meals over a number of days adding to the costs. — AP photos

## Indian businessman hosts wedding for 151 couples

With the brides dressed in traditional red and gold embroidered saris and the grooms wearing long tunics and turbans, 151 young couples tied the knot at a mass wedding in the western Indian state of Gujarat yesterday. The nuptials were hosted by an Indian diamond trader who has been paying for the weddings of fatherless women in the city of Surat for several years. Mahesh Savani said he first stepped in to play the role of the father in 2008, when one of his employees died a few days before the weddings of his two daughters. Every year since then, Savani has paid for the weddings of young women from poor families who have lost their fathers.

Weddings in India are expensive affairs, with the bride's family traditionally expected to pay the groom a large dowry of cash and gifts. Hundreds of people, mostly family members and neighbors of the couple, are hosted at lavish meals over a number of days, adding to the cost. Savani said the wedding and gifts for the 151 couples would cost more than 50 million rupees (\$750,000), with around 100,000 guests joining in the three days of festivities that ended yesterday. The sprawling school



Indian brides wait for transport before a mass wedding.



Indian brides sit for a group photo before a mass wedding.



Indian Muslim bride Nagmabegum Qadri looks during a group photo session.

ground where the mass wedding was held was decorated with flowers and lights. "I see this as something sacred, so I am not counting the expense," Savani said. The businessman, who has made his fortune in diamond trading and real estate, said he saw himself as a "foster father" to the young women. He gave each of the

brides gold jewelry, clothes, and pots and pans to set up her new home, much like the dowry given in traditional Indian weddings. The brides praised Savani's efforts. "Ever since my father died two years ago, my mother has worried about my wedding and how to raise money for the expenses," said 23-year-old Meetal Gondalia. "Savani Papa has eased all her worries." "Only someone who has lost her father can understand how much a girl needs her dad on her wedding day," said Vimla Koringa, 27, as she waited for her wedding ceremony to begin. — AP



Indian brides leave after a group photo before a mass wedding.



Indian brides sit in a bus as they arrive before a mass wedding.



Mona Shores choir students perform during the annual Singing Christmas Tree at the Frauenthal Center in Muskegon, Mich. The Mona Shores Singing Christmas Tree combines the usual elements into an unusual show that will draw thousands of spectators. — AP photos

## Michigan students ascend 5-storey Singing Christmas Tree

It's not that an oversized tree adorned with ornaments is uncommon as a student choir sings carols in the days leading up to Christmas. It's more that the towering steel tree is decorated with garland, twinkling lights ... and hundreds of teenagers. The Mona Shores Singing Christmas Tree combines the usual elements into an unusual show that will draw thousands of spectators this weekend. The 67-foot-tall tree features 25,000 lights, 5,000 linear feet of greenery, and 15 tiers on which about 220 choir members stand. About 50 other students sing from positions near the base of the tree.

"It's basically ... a bunch of choir students standing in a tree singing Christmas music," said Brynne Wilcox, a Mona Shores High School senior who is taking part in her fourth and final set of shows, which run through Saturday at the Frauenthal Center in Muskegon.

Freshmen are relegated to the bottom of the five-story tree, while sophomores and juniors populate the middle. Seniors set up shop in the upper levels. The very top is the domain of the "Tree Angel," a senior selected by Shawn Lawton, the director of the Mona Shores High School Choir. "It's not that kid who's the greatest singer, necessarily," Lawton said. "But instead just someone with a lot of heart and maybe has lived through a lot and still smiles." Lawton picked two Tree Angels this year, marking only the second time that's been done in the 31-year history of the show. They are alternating shows atop the tree.

Wilcox is positioned just below the angel. "It's definitely a little scarier when you're 14 rows up than when you're standing on the ground," she said. But Wilcox needn't worry, because Darcy Welsh and her fellow "tree monkeys" are never too far away. Welsh is one of the two dozen or so

choir moms and dads who climb into the innards of the tree and stand watch on platforms located behind the singers, ready to assist those who are overcome by the height and heat from the lights shining on them.

"If we have to bring them out of the tree, we have an area with nurses, and there is food and drink," said Welsh, herself a Mona Shores High graduate and a former Singing Christmas Tree participant. All 275 student singers made it safely through a free dress rehearsal Wednesday night for members of the community with special needs, the elderly, and others who might not otherwise be able to come to the show. Audience members roared in approval when the Singing Christmas Tree - shrouded in darkness at the start of the show - burst into light as the choir belted out "Gloria." "It means the world to me to carry on the tradition," Lawton said. — AP